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THE LEAGUE'S BUSINESS

Prizes Awarded Winners of Radio Essay Contest.—To supplement the current "You and Your Government" radio series on "The Crisis in Municipal Finance," the National Municipal League has sponsored an essay contest on the subject: "My Town—What Can I Do to Boost Its Credit?" A prize of \$100 was offered for the best paper from a college student and a similar award for a high school student. The prizes were made possible through the generosity of Frank H. Morse, of Lehman Brothers, New York, and Morris Tremaine, Comptroller of New York State.

The judges of the contest were: Miss Katharine Ludington, of the Committee on Civic Education by Radio and the League of Women Voters; Richard Welling, chairman of the National Self-Government Committee, and former civil service commissioner of New York; and Lawson Purdy, Comptroller of the Corporation of Trinity Church, former director of the Charity Organization Society of New York, and former president of the National Municipal League.

The prizes were awarded to Leon S. Smelo, student in the Medical College of the University of Pennsylvania, and Rose E. Smith, senior in the Newtown High School of New York City. The prize-winning papers are published in this issue of the National Municipal Review.

* * *

Radio Broadcasts to be Continued.—When the current "You and Your Government" radio series terminates on February 6, a new program will be announcing which should be just as interesting and timely as its predecessors. The remaining discussions in the present series on: "The Crisis in Municipal Finance" are as follows:

January 9—"Modernizing the Mechanism of Local Finance." Mayor Joseph F. Loehr, Yonkers, New York; William P. Capes, Executive Secretary, New York Conference of Mayors and other Municipal Officials; Prof. Thomas H. Reed, University of Michigan.

January 16—"Regenerating Local Civil Service." Charles P. Messick, Chief Examiner and Secretary, Civil Service Commission, New Jersey; H. Eliot Kaplan, Secretary, National Civil Service Reform League; Prof. William E. Mosher, Director, School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

January 23—"Renovating Local Administration." Lavinia Engle, Chairman, Civil Service Reform Committee, Maryland House of Delegates; Prof. A. R. Hatton, Northwestern University.

January 30—"The Banks and Better Municipal Credit." O. C. Lester, Vice-President, Bowery Savings Bank, New York; George V. McLaughlin, President, Brooklyn Trust Co., Brooklyn, New York; Luther Gulick, Director, Institute of Public Administration.

February 6—"The Investor and Sound Local Finance." Dr. Louis I. Dublin, Vice-President, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company; Willard I. Hamilton, Vice-President, Prudential Insurance Company of America; President, New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce; Harold S. Buttenheim, Editor, The American City Magazine.

* * *

President Seasongood Much in Demand as a Public Speaker.—Whenever and wherever President Seasongood speaks, his observations are always enthusiastically received. He has had a busy schedule this month. His present and past engagements include: addresses in New Orleans, under the auspices of the Political Science Department of Tulane University, Indianapolis, Louisville, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Northampton (Smith College) and New York City. The National Municipal League is deeply appreciative that our president, in the midst of his many activities, finds time for this missionary work.

HOWARD P. JONES, *Secretary.*

Editorial
Comment

❖
January

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Cassandra á la Mode

CASSANDRA'S unpopularity throughout the ages is due to the fact that no one would take her warning. If the Trojans had listened to her, she would be one of our heroines of legendary history instead of the symbol of ill omen she is today. So often does the public leader's credit for judgment and integrity depend, not on himself, but on the intelligence of his following.

It is a thankless procedure at this time, when the city manager plan is so enthusiastically urged forward, when no less an authority than Richard S. Childs announces that this system is at last on the straight road to success, to center attention a moment on one dangerously weak link in the whole chain of local interplays that is involved in city manager administration. But the weakness is there, it is inherent with disaster, and it must be considered as thoughtfully, and with as much vigorous action in view, as we are expending on the stronger and less disconcerting links. It is for this reason that the present issue of the REVIEW breaks into the chorus of relieved congratulation over several city manager victories, with a few brief pen pictures from men whose experience has shown them that the city manager's position is still precarious, and also has shown them why.

* * *

IN A little southwestern town, Bernard J. Smith assumes the city manager-

ship, apparently equipped with a sound philosophy of administration, with legal clearance which, if left to himself, would have given him opportunity to carry his ideas through, and with the individual training and capacity to make them operative. He is defeated before he is fairly started by an element he cannot control, but which must inevitably be a factor in city manager administration anywhere. In a larger eastern city, Walter H. C. Laves shows how this same malign element first gave to a city manager campaign the appearance of a mirage success, then turned upon itself and scrapped the whole project. In Indiana, Dr. C. T. Malan uncovers this element itself by a unique experiment in finding out what the average voter knows.

This trilogy should be read thoroughly and its bearing considered upon permanent advance in local self government in every community, and in any political system whose life depends on the approval of the voters. It gives rise to thoughts that may not be pleasant, but are salutary. It shifts the emphasis of importance away from the technical training of the city manager, to the training of the people to support their manager.

* * *

The concept is not new. Its trouble is that it is so obvious as always to be taken for granted, and so intangible

that the mind shies from it and prefers to dwell on the concrete problems to be dealt with, if and when the city manager is really permitted to do his work. But the experiences here cited are neither vague nor remote. They are actualities, as much a part of community life as waterworks or streets. These writers show that an intelligence deficit in a community is more dangerous to the city manager than a financial one. You can borrow money to tide you over a payroll, but you cannot borrow brains to tide you over an election.

This difficulty always has been with us, but it is only in such devices as the city manager plan that it appears as a serious obstacle. This is because the city manager plan is a frank recognition that public administration is a technical field, outside the thought range of the average citizen regardless of his mental capacity. American politics have never been like that before. The voters will follow the politician because they can understand him when they cannot understand the city manager. Naturally, then, when both appeal to the voter's understanding, only one result is possible.

* * *

That is why the first victory at the polls for the city manager plan so often turns out to be the easiest. Discontent with the political regime overthrows a form of city government in favor of a new form—any form so long as it is different. But the "victory" at any time may prove an illusion. It turns out to be a victory of discontent, not of progress. So today we see Dubuque voting whether to abandon the plan, the city manager of Oakland ejected from office on an excuse that would bankrupt a side street plumber if he used it as a business principle, the city manager of Middletown, Ohio, resigning in despair because the same electorate that

adopted the new form of government has now elected a majority of councilmen hostile to it. These examples will increase in geometric ratio just so long as we procrastinate in organizing a definite, comprehensive campaign to give understanding of its aims to the voters, as an indispensable part of our efforts improve local government through the city manager system.

Nothing but encouragement for this idea is offered by the three men who in this issue describe their encounters with the popular mind in dealing with civic problems. They are as definitely agreed that the thing can be done, as they are that the handicap is hopeless until it is done. Again they show why from their own experiences, which is what makes their testimony so valuable. It is possible also that some light will be revealed to astute subscribers who are able to read between the lines, and see influences at work of which the authors, in the midst of the combat, were unaware. Clifton E. Hickok's observations as a former city manager are further testimony to this need. Encouragement also is found in the article by Harold I. Baumes showing what the voters of an ordinary community want to know about their own government service.

* * *

As for the city managers themselves, the lonely image of Cassandra persistently recurs. She was high priestess of a cult to whom the Trojans gave lip service without comprehension. She tried to warn her people that "Greeks bearing gifts" were the same old enemies they had armed themselves to fight, but her language was too cryptic for their minds. In the presence of a tangible Greek gift she was classed as a theorist, and after twelve years' warfare the Trojans opened their own gates to the enemy.

EDWARD M. BARROWS.



HEADLINES

After a successful campaign on behalf of Mayor-elect Mansfield, the Boston Good Government Association ends its thirty-year career on December third with this Bostonesque statement: "We have for some time been coming to the conclusion that an organization such as ours can function efficiently only during the time of the generation which brought it forth. It cannot very well project itself into another generation; other times, other matters."

* * *

Cleveland, announces Mayor Harry Davis, faces bankruptcy and he proposes payment of public employees in scrip as one step toward alleviation. Before proceeding too far with this idea the Cleveland city fathers might do well to consult their neighbors in Detroit. City officials there have been having some experiences with this medium that they are burning to tell about, and they would probably be glad to cross the Lake and make the matter clear just for their expenses—provided these were not offered in scrip.

* * *

City Manager Ossian E. Carr, of Oakland, California, is removed from office on the grave charge of coming from somewhere else, the city fathers being at pains to make it clear that Mr. Carr's honesty and efficiency are not questioned. They merely believe in paying Oakland salaries to Oakland men. Lucky this profound principle of statecraft was not discovered earlier. Otherwise only Indians would be eligible for office,—and not many of them.

* * *

Campbell, Ohio, (population, 15,000), acquires a city manager without even an election. With securities in default, salaries two years in arrears, and current bills unpaid, the courts put the city in the hands of a receiver. Municipal officials remain in office with their powers limited to signing on the receiver's dotted lines.

* * *

A Dubuque, Iowa, "Taxpayers' Committee" presents a petition to the city council, asking for a referendum on retaining the city manager form of government and signed with 6,181 names. On protracted scrutiny the council finds that the names were assembled from three different petitions, one in 1927, another in 1933, and a third "purported to have been signed in 1933, but containing evidence therein of having been signed at a much earlier date." After eliminating 674 signatures of persons (1) who are not registered at the address given, (2) who were on the same petition more than once, (3) *who were discovered to be dead at the time the petitions were filed*, and (4) who were "other than the electors whose names they purported to be," the council nevertheless decides that a quorum of valid signatures still remains and orders a referendum accordingly. Next, the District Court throws out all the petitions as illegally made, and there the matter rests.

In Beloit, Wisconsin, the Circuit Court holds that street lighting is a governmental function over which the public service commission has no power, so it is not necessary for the city to obtain consent to erect its own municipal lighting plant.

* * *

New York State is in upheaval over county reorganization. The citizenry seems to want it. The patriots controlling the two major parties want anything else but. They have to appear to want it, however, to keep the peace with their constituents, so each party moans aloud because the other party is blocking the road to true progress. Gilbert and Sullivan came a generation too soon.

* * *

Santa Monica votes down the city manager plan, 7,340 to 4,366.

* * *

New York City's taxicab tax has been ruled illegal by the courts, and now the city is wondering what to do with approximately \$800,000 collected under its provisions. The city cannot spend it legally, the taxicab companies have no claim to it, the taxi passengers who paid it did not leave their addresses with their chauffeurs, and the city has neither authority nor facilities for continuing possession. Can't keep it, can't spend it, and can't give it back—but can use it unstintedly otherwise. The city fathers contemplate this sum between worries over an impending payroll deficit.

* * *

Governor Olson of Minnesota recommends a state referendum on state liquor dispensaries, his own predilections being in favor of this method of control, while the consensus of local official opinion seems to favor license control.

* * *

In an address before the St. Louis Rotary Club, Governor Caulfield of Missouri, urges concentration of all state power in the governor, for efficiency's sake. At the same time, Simeon E. Leland, of the Illinois Tax Commission, publicly urges the entire abolition of states, with the nation regionalized around cities, the regions responsible to the federal government. Next, the *Norfolk* (Nebraska) *Press* advocates smaller state legislatures to reduce the cost of government, and the *Clifton Forge Review* favors applying the same idea for Congress. There are too many national conventions already, it's true. Still, somebody ought to get these people together somewhere.

* * *

Add to the Hall of Fame the Chicago bankers who refused to handle local municipal bond issues because of their insecurity, and then bought \$42,000 worth of Omaha city bonds which turned out to be forgeries.

* * *

And the worthy Ohio electorate which on the same election day voted (1) to lower the legal tax maximum, and (2) to institute a state system for old-age pensions.



A City Manager Loses His Job

The story of an arch
that had no key-
stone—in which the
author points out pit-
falls for executives to
avoid

BY BERNARD J. SMITH

Baytown, Texas

CITY managers, as well as the increasing number of former city managers, will generally agree that the administrative head of a city is never long out of difficulties. They are his stock in trade. But it seems pertinent to review some of the difficulties that by their nature may stultify the city manager's position. Outstanding in my own experience are the following:

(a) A hostile commission that gives lip service to the manager plan, while fully intending to rough-ride the manager.

(b) A powerful anti-manager political bloc with a strong following.

(c) An ambiguous charter that leaves plenty of room for argument.

(d) A general feeling prevalent among the voters that managing a small town is a petty business man's job.

That there are other difficulties goes without saying. Those listed involve a multitude of minor perplexities. Not all may exist simultaneously, but from his first hand experience as the manager of a small town, the writer is witness that when they do co-exist, they can cloud the city administrator's life. He battled with them continuously for almost a year before he succumbed under the onslaughts of a blood-thirsty opposition.

In dealing with difficulty (a), the policy adopted by the manager had six planks: first, to tie the commission to

certain principles and rely on their sense of fair play and justice to honor them; second, to seize every opportunity to convert to the manager plan any unbiased members of the opposition; third, to refuse flatly to assume responsibility for appointees placed on the city staff without any regard to efficiency, or without considering the manager; fourth, to follow consistently the best interests of the city, irrespective of party lines; fifth, to show every consideration to the city hall personnel no matter how appointed, and thus strive for loyalty; sixth, to eliminate personal publicity, and instead to throw the spotlight on the work performed, and on the council's activities.

WHAT WOULD DANIEL DO?

But the situation was something on a par with Daniel's entrance into the lion's den, minus the personal magnetism of the lion-taming Daniel. The going was exceedingly rough. The first plank failed at the outset for the respective functions of commissioners and manager had never been reduced to writing, and only verbal acquiescence to general policies could be obtained. Resignation of the city manager should have been in order right then.

The remaining planks succeeded well in practice, except the sixth. Personal publicity could not be avoided. A struggle was on between the old and the new concepts of government, and the

local press, sensing this struggle, played up the personal aspects. But the success of the major portion of the program gradually built up a bulwark that seemed to forecast ultimate success, and this encouraged the manager to discard all thought of resignation. A human struggle was going on at the city hall, and partisans within the commission and on the streets outside gathered around the opposing standards.

A VICTORY THAT BACK-FIRED

The test came at last, after months of see-saw struggle between the manager who fought for freedom of administrative action, and the commission majority which wanted to make the manager's office a cats-paw for firing and hiring indiscriminately; a general rubber stamp in other words. The manager made a list of appointments for a work relief board and submitted the names for ratification. After a fiery two weeks the appointments were ratified, and final victory seemed clinched.

But there is no escaping death and taxes. Unfortunately death called a hand by eliminating a very fair and judicial minded commissioner. A new commissioner was elected during the heat of the work relief struggle. Two weeks after being inducted into office on a platform in which retention of the manager had been prominent, this commissioner made a motion to dismiss the manager. "Harmony" was alleged to be the reason, and in truth, where a majority wish to force through a program, political "harmony" was essential.

Commenting on this difficulty of serving an anti-manager commission, it is my opinion that no man does himself justice by serving under such conditions. Yet the alternatives are to become a *de facto* city secretary, or else leave the office vacant. It may be that the best way out is to demand a show-down on some clear-cut issue, and then if the result is defeat, to resign and publish the

entire record. Such a course makes a martyr of the newly appointed manager. The natural inclination is to battle ahead as long as possible, hoping that affairs will right themselves. But experience shows that politicians elected to the commission under such conditions will brook no opposition and the manager is doomed to failure. Hence the final answer to such conditions, in the writer's opinion, is a concerted move for an education campaign, meantime letting the anti-manager forces in power pick a rubber stamp employee to fill the pseudo-manager's office.

Discussing difficulty (b)—the anti-manager political bloc. The manager concentrated on such members of this group as he could, and discussed the problems at issue, avoiding any semblance of dictatorship—which was their battle cry,—and insisting on a good humored basis in argument. An active conciliatory policy was followed, and it succeeded while the manager was in office. It failed at the polls; a triumphant partisan machine defeating a nebulous, ill-organized "sane" element in a mud-slinging campaign.

WHY THE CAMPAIGN FAILED

Strong criticisms can be made here. First it is axiomatic that right without might is rarely the winner. Because the opposition "pulls fast ones" that seem shameless and bound to end in disaster, is no proof that they will lose at the polls. Public memory is short, and only continuous organized effort will rid a city of a political machine, even if that machine does represent but a minority. Consequently there should be some ethical way in which the manager can go in and fight when he encounters an insidious campaign being waged under cover, with lies and misinformation poisoning the public mind. For more than his job is at stake. It is a tried and essentially efficient system of government that is being undermined.

Unless there is another leader versed in the issues at stake, the manager, with his inside knowledge of the real causes of friction, and the political machinations involved, must lead the defense. And in a small town, no business or professional man depending on the whole citizenship for his clientele can afford to be the banner bearer. In this predicament if the manager is hog-tied ethically to neutrality he is at a serious disadvantage, and eventually becomes disgusted with an impossible situation. By all means he should take the offensive.

HOODWINKING BLIND VOTERS

As to difficulty (c)—an ambiguous charter: in this instance the manager followed the obvious route of referring all technicalities to the city attorney and attempting to iron out the glaring inconsistencies with him by a give-and-take method. But a city attorney who is politically appointed can wriggle under legal subterfuges like an eel. Casuistry is a strong feature in the legal world and a politician-lawyer is a past master of this art. It soon became apparent to the manager that only constant publicity which would show the need for a revised charter could effect a cure. Lacking a standing charter committee, the issues involved were never made plain to the voters, and they seem destined to be a political issue until they are changed. This emphasizes the vital good a standing charter committee can perform, and also the great need for expert drafting in all charters.

The last difficulty of all, that the small-town citizenry believed running the community was a one man job for any good fellow around town proved to be the worst. An ignorant electorate is fertile ground for the most fantastic beliefs. Fantastic as it may sound, one commissioner made the motion (this in a town of over 5,000!) to restrict the city hall staff to the manager and a stenographer. To administer a town with municipally owned utilities, to maintain a street system of first, second, and third class roads, and to maintain efficient tax assessments and collections, would seem to a sensible observer more than a two person job. The commissioner's motion reveals the vast gulf of ignorance between the electorate's conception of the amount of routine hard work necessary at the city hall, and the actual facts. Good government deriving from an ignorant electorate is a *rara avis*. Rather, such an electorate provides the background for machine dominance and demagogery par excellence.

Reviewing the whole situation, it is time that emphasis was taken off the manager and placed on the commission. Without good commissioners, the best manager is useless. A poor commission can wreck the work of generations. The manager, being an appointee, cannot be any way so dangerous. As vitally as we need able city managers, just as vitally do we need competent, honest city commissioners. Otherwise the city managers will never be out of difficulties.



Utica Battles for the Manager Plan

But ineffective citizens' organization bows before efficient election day tactics of political machine

BY WALTER H. C. LAVES

Hamilton College, Clinton, New York

SENTIMENT in favor of the city manager form of government continues to flourish in the city of Utica, New York, despite three setbacks during the last eleven years. An overwhelming defeat of 11,925 to 6,041 in 1922; a court decision invalidating the victory of 1932; and a defeat by more than 4,000 votes in the special election of June, 1933 has left the sponsors of the plan undismayed and merely waiting for the most auspicious moment for the next attack.

The reasons for the last two failures of the movement appear to have been (1) the political ineptitude of the sponsors of the plan, and (2) the absence of any good scandal concerning the government of the city. The campaign which preceded the election of 1931 was poorly organized. Although the original demand for the change in government had been made early in 1930, no steps toward organizing opinion were taken until a few weeks before the election of November 1932. The surprising thing is that the manager group carried the election by 12,574 to 10,910.

Had there been any organization at all, and had there been any real charge of corruption against the city administration, the vote might have been far more decisive. However, organization costs money, and of this the reformers had too little. Nine hundred dollars, collected in small sums, was the total of

its funds. Business men and industrialists generally refused to contribute, partly because they lacked enthusiasm for the movement, and partly for fear of political tax reprisals, should their names become known.

A VANISHING TRIUMPH

Yet a victory is a victory, no matter by how small a plurality it is won, and the real penalty for want of organization did not become evident until a few days after the election. Rumors that the legality of the election was to be contested were confirmed when on December 11, 1931 Nicholas G. Powers, acting for M. William Bray, Democratic county chairman, secured from Supreme Court Justice F. J. Cregg an order restraining the city clerk of Utica from certifying to the vote on the change of government, pending argument of the case in court. The substitution of a new plaintiff in place of Mr. Powers, who was disbarred from practice for reasons not related to this case, and the prolonged illness of Justice Cregg delayed action of any sort until September, 1932. At this time the new plaintiff secured from Justice Cregg approval of a stipulation discontinuing his connection with the case. On October 1, 1932, following demands from various groups that a decision be reached, a friendly taxpayer's suit was brought before Supreme Court Justice Dowling at-

tacking the legality of the election on the ground (1) that the city clerk of Utica and the county clerk of Oneida had failed to conform to statutory requirements, and (2) that the Optional Government Law of 1914 was unconstitutional. Justice Dowling upheld the plaintiffs on the first ground, and declared the adoption of the city manager plan illegal.¹ The political ineptitude of the reform group in playing directly into the hands of its opponents by failing to exercise the most elementary circumspection compelled the learned Justice to remark:

The provisions of the statute governing the submission of this question to the electors of Utica are neither uncertain nor ambiguous. They are as patent as a mid-day August sun. Of no avail now, the labor expended. Thwarted, the will of the majority so handsomely expressed at the polls. The blunders made are safe even from the curative powers of a court of equity. . . . Let the blunders of this venture in political action remind the electorate that success in public affairs is the product of eternal vigilance; that once enlisted in a public enterprise they must push the attack relentlessly till the last trench is carried and the field is won.

THE SECOND BLUNDER

Undismayed by their defeat and accepting the challenge of the controlling political parties, the sponsors of the city manager plan organized for another referendum. In view of the momentum which the cause had gained, there was no reason why victory should not have been theirs at the next general election. But the champions of good government seemed to be courting defeat. In my opinion, another blunder was committed. Instead of submitting the question at the fall election, it was

presented at a special election in June, 1933. Under the best of circumstances it is well nigh impossible for a poorly organized, non-professional reform group to measure up to the efficiency of a political machine at a special election.

BLUNDER NUMBER THREE

At general elections there is chance of upsetting the *status quo* because the widespread ballyhoo of campaigns serves to bring out the most lethargic "good citizens." Once they are at the polls it requires little additional effort to vote in favor of reform measures. At a special election, however, the volume of voters turning out is in direct proportion to the efficiency of the machine, and there is no machine so efficient as that which has for its cogs the thousands who will tangibly benefit from a favorable outcome of the election.² Good citizens are interested in honest government, but this is not a thing for which men fight, unless corruption has gone so far as to undermine economic security.

To the machines the issue was clear: success of the manager plan would curtail the perquisites of public office; to go to the polls was simply a matter of defending one's income and very right of existence. To the "better element" the issue was not so clear: there had been no charges of corruption—in fact, Utica's government was supposed to be above the average; and should the manager plan win, it was at least possible that the new machinery of government would fall into the hands of the politicians. Election day being an exceptionally hot one, those whose livelihood depended upon the outcome went to the polls, with their friends. Those to whom politics was at most an avocation cooled

¹The statute requires the city clerk and the county clerk to post and publish notices of the forthcoming submission of the question to the voters. Both failed to conform to the statutory requirement. Sec. 20 of Art. 2 of Laws of 1914, Chapter 444.

²Editor's note: There is, of course, the opposing view that the charter question would have been overshadowed in a general election.

How Much Does a Voter Know?

Revealing a dangerous rift between a voter's knowledge and the real facts

CONDENSED FROM A REPORT OF C. T. MALAN

Two weeks prior to the 1932 election, Dr. C. T. Malan, professor of social studies, State Teachers College, Terre Haute, Indiana, with the aid of a group of advanced students in government, conducted a survey relating primarily to the degree and character of information possessed by voters at that time.

Two amendments to the state constitution of Indiana were submitted to the voters: one to permit taxation upon income, and the second to require certain educational qualifications for the practice of law. Out of the total number of 1,600,484 voting at the general election at that time, 690,363 or 43.13 per cent did not vote on either amendment. Neither amendment carried.

The following table shows the results of the questionnaire:

1. Occupation of voters answering the questionnaire (3,279): business men (owners and managers), 261; clergy, 12; farmers, 168; housekeepers, 462; lawyers, 42; physicians, 72; public officials, 45; salesmen, 147; skilled labor, 507; stenographers and office workers, 189; students, 222; teachers, 390; unemployed, 195; unskilled laborers, 567.

2. Will you vote at the coming election?

Yes	2,886	88 (per cent)
No	297	9
Don't know	96	3

3. Are there any proposed amendments to the Indiana state constitution to be voted on in this coming election?

Yes	1,650	50 (per cent)
No	411	13
Don't know	1,218	37

4. Have you heard anything in political speeches pertaining to any proposed amendments?

Yes	654	20 (per cent)
No	2,202	67
Don't know	423	13

5. Have you read anything in newspapers pertaining to any proposed amendments?

Yes	1,047	32 (per cent)
No	1,809	55
Don't know	423	13

6. If proposed amendments are to be voted upon this November, have they as yet passed the General Assembly?

Yes	705	22 (per cent)
No	651	19
Don't know	1,923	59

7. If there are any proposed amendments, how many are there?

None	237	7 (per cent)
One	318	10
Two	657	20
Three	36	1
Four	6	0.2
Don't know	2,025	62

8. If there are any proposed amendments, what are they?

Don't know	2,091	64 (per cent)
Income Tax	321	10
Lawyers	45	1
Both	399	12
Miscellaneous	426	13

The number of perfect papers was 237, or 7 per cent of the total.

Dr. Malan's observations and conclusions follow:

Certain classes of people show a lack of interest in voting. Newspapers and periodicals, as well as speakers can do much to change this condition; but business men, labor unions, Chambers of Commerce, and service clubs are in position to aid also. Last, but not least, our high schools and higher institutions should inspire interest in government. Otherwise our school system is failing in its main objective, that of making good citizens.

Only a very small percentage of our people, regardless of age or occupation, know how our fundamental law is enacted, nor do they have much information on how our government functions. Clearly, the only institution capable of handling this problem is the school. This calls for more extensive and practical courses in the study of government in our higher institutions of learning.

A great majority of the people show a lack of information concerning our current governmental problems in the solution of which they are to aid. It was not enough for the voters of Indiana to know that there were two amendments to be voted upon and to be

able to name the two amendments, for one might know these facts and yet not be able to vote intelligently. The voter needs to know more than mere statements of fact. Many organizations—business concerns, labor unions, service and professional clubs—could help to develop such intelligence. It has been urged that citizenship means privilege and opportunity, and that every voter should discharge in an intelligent manner the high privilege which is his, but the facts remain, that unless information is made easy to secure and easy to understand, the average voter will remain ignorant.

It may be said in conclusion that many requests for enlightenment have been received from different sections in the state from those who were interviewed. Nearly all who were interviewed seemed to have become very much interested. Seventy-five per cent of those who did not know, asked for information or where information could be found. Most of them seemed surprised, embarrassed, and deplored their lack of information. Less than 2 per cent refused to give the information desired. Many suggested, after they had filled out the questionnaire, that they were ignorant and were going to find out how much their neighbors, their friends, and relatives knew.

The study warrants the statement that the people in a democracy will vote intelligently when informed. Responsibility for the dissemination of this information rests upon those agencies which have the privilege of molding public opinion.



Citizen Responsibility Under the Manager Plan

Without organization
the friends of good
government are no
match for profession-
al politicians

BY CLIFTON E. HICKOK

Former City Manager, Alameda, California

BECAUSE the newest type of municipal government is designated as "the city manager form of government" there is created in the mind of the layman the impression that the city manager himself is the most important feature of the scheme. The importance of the city council far transcends that of the city manager, and the latter should be considered, and he should so consider himself at all times, as merely a chief subordinate, appointed to carry out the policies of the city council, subject to the provisions of the charter. However, neither the city manager nor the city council is the most important requisite for the success of the manager form. The paramount requisite is a strong militant organization of progressive and alert citizens, determined first to secure the adoption of a city manager charter, and then to protect what has been won against the inevitable attacks of politicians.

It has been the invariable experience that the old political bosses and their organizations bitterly resist the adoption of the new charter. If the charter is adopted in spite of their opposition, the next step in their strategy of attack is an attempt to elect representatives to the first city council, in order to control the appointment of the city manager and subordinates, and by covert methods to bring discredit, without delay, upon the city manager form of

government. Failing in this initial attempt to control the city council, they lay their plans and prepare their ammunition far in advance of every succeeding election, and though they may suffer temporary defeat, they never lose hope nor lack for support from certain quarters. As a consequence of these ever-present malcontents, ably led by experienced and determined political chiefs, the day almost invariably arrives when the better element of the citizenry is caught in temporary apathy. They may awaken to find, to their dismay, that the government is in the hands of the enemies of the city manager plan. There then follows the appointment of a manager who is amenable to political control, with a resultant prostitution of the principles and ideals of the city manager form. This will lead, unless corrective measures are taken, to the abandonment of the plan by the disgusted voters. And so the objective of the politicians is attained.

The reaction of certain political elements is as precise and inevitable as the reaction which occurs when certain chemical elements are combined in a laboratory experiment. The only successful way to combat it is to introduce the reagent necessary to bring the desirable result, namely, a strong civic organization of alert, ably led citizens who are determined to ward off attacks

from professional politicians, and to preserve good government.

Thomas Jefferson's immortal phrase: "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" might well be paraphrased to "Eternal vigilance is the price of good government." This vigilance can only be made operative and effective through collective and organized action. The age-old military axiom: "Divide your enemies and then defeat them" is as applicable to the operation of public affairs as it is to the conduct of war. And no one appreciates this particular bit of military strategy better than do the political chieftains. Without organization, the friends of good government are no match for professional politicians.

THE MANAGER DEPENDENT UPON OTHERS

It is true that the city manager is the outstanding figurehead, and that unless he is properly selected the government will fail. But the proper city manager cannot be selected and he cannot function effectively, unless certain progressive and essential steps have been taken leading to his selection. The degree of importance increases from the city manager, through the city council, to the people, as embodied in a strong civic organization, dedicated to the ideals of good government. Without this organization, a good city council cannot be selected, and without a good city council the proper city manager will not be appointed, nor properly supported, and until this self-evident truth is realized and acted upon by the friends of good government, the city manager form will be in constant hazard. The real danger period arrives after the city manager has been functioning successfully for a few years, and the citizens are lulled into a feeling of security and

fail to exercise their duties at the polls. For this reason a virile organization must be maintained and kept functioning year in and year out, to galvanize the citizens into action when necessary to prevent the professional politicians from gradually regaining control of municipal affairs.

Every city manager of experience is familiar with the innumerable methods of attacks practiced by the old political organizations. Motivated by the desire for privilege and patronage, they use every method from political sniping to mass attacks. False issues are raised; minor mistakes are pounced upon and magnified; political sabotage is practiced; attempts are made to disturb the morale and discipline of city departments, and constant efforts are maintained in a hundred ways to prevent a successful operation of the government. The city manager himself is prevented by the prohibitions of the charter, and by the ethics of his profession, from entering into political combat with these disturbing groups. Moreover, often a city manager is confronted with a condition where one or more members of his city council are unfriendly to the form of government, and from their vantage point on the legislative body, they are able to interfere seriously with the successful operation of the government.

It is to combat these conditions, and to support the city manager in the maintenance of an efficient government, that a strong civic organization is imperative. The people must be brought to a realization that good government, once achieved, does not of necessity continue, unless eternal vigilance is exercised to protect it from attack. This vigilance can function through a strong, militant, permanent organization of determined citizens.

My Town— What Can I Do to Boost Its Credit?

Prize-winning essay in
National Municipal
League's high school
contest

ROSE E. SMITH

Newtown High School, New York

THIS conversation took place between two high school students, Arthur and Anne, and their friend, Mr. Richard Craig.

"Why Anne and Arthur what brings you here this afternoon?"

"Oh Mr. Craig! Today in school, one of our teachers asked us to prepare a discussion on "My Town—What Can I Do to Boost Its Credit?" Arthur and I simply can't think of even one way, so we hoped you could help us. Have you any ideas that would be practical? There are ever so many theories we might suggest but we decided that we wanted to present a workable idea."

"Well, that is a large order, but I should say there is really only one practical course open to you as high school students. I can tell you that in one word—organize."

"But, Mr. Craig, what good will that do? I can't see what organization has to do with boosting our city's credit!"

"Oh, Arthur, just think! If your school alone bands together, you would have an active group of students numbering over eight thousand. Each student would come into close contact with at least three voters. Multiply the total registration of New York's high schools by three, and you will get a conservative estimate of the number of voters who would be reached by your campaign against civic listlessness. Once

the citizens were lifted out of this slough of indifference, the reaction which follows would bring forward a demand for the reestablishment of not only financial credit but the credit which is municipal prestige."

"I see what you mean, Mr. Craig! We ought to organize like a political party with a platform and organized activities!"

"You've grasped it perfectly, Anne. Now, Arthur, I can see what your next question is going to be, so I'll answer before it is asked. You, of course, have to reach the students and interest them enough to have carried into their homes the principles of your organization. I think that will be fairly easy. Already the students themselves have felt the disadvantages which grow out of the gross mismanagement of municipal affairs by incompetent officials or a political machine. Then too, everyone likes to feel that he or she belongs to a society which is striving for a cause—especially when that cause implies reform."

Here is a possible platform for your organization, but of course it will need revision and additions to make it complete. However, it will do for a start.

1. Organize an aroused public opinion. That is the only effective weapon against a political machine.

2. Aim to centralize authority in

government agents directly responsible to the citizens.

3. Bring the city departments, their equipment, and personnel up to date. That a department or departmental routine has been in existence for fifty to one hundred years does not necessarily indicate that it is efficient or even useful. Care must be exercised in cutting down the various branches of the government. There should be no false economy, nor should economy be carried to the point where efficiency is destroyed.

4. Aim to equalize the educational advantages for all the children of the municipality. With so large a proportion of expenditures going into the field of education, our educational system should more closely approximate the ideal.

5. Consolidate our many courts. One of our largest channels of loss is in our municipal courts. When justice is mismanaged, time, money, and convictions are lost—we must stop that loss!

6. Let New York take advantage of the financial assistance and coöperation proffered by the federal government."

"But, Mr. Craig, how can we reach all the students to let them know what we are trying to do?"

"Well, Arthur, in your school there are several teachers sufficiently interested in civic welfare to act as faculty advisers for your organization. Your principal would certainly give you his whole-hearted support, and help launch the campaign. An assembly each month might be devoted to student discussion of current civic problems and the steps

taken by other communities to surmount similar difficulties. The extra-curricular activities are many and varied, and the school clubs might agree to turn over half of one meeting each month to discussion by the members of city-wide developments. This would be only the beginning of an ever-growing interest which would be built up among the students, and be carried by them into their homes.

You see what an organization could do once it started. It would give us, the future voters, a conception of the necessity for reëstablishing the credit of the city, to prevent the children of the future from facing a similar crisis. It is not fair for the voters of today to make the problems, the solutions of which are left to us to cope with as best we may. Therefore the demand for honest, efficient administration of public affairs must be brought before these blind, careless electors who have brought us where we are today—in a hole!

Since this *status quo* of municipal affairs has been arrived at after many years of indifference by the electorate to what has been going on, it stands to reason that a cure cannot be effected over a period of a few months. But by arousing our present voters to such a pitch that they will demand that a scientific supervision of city affairs take the place of the old slack mode of what is everybody's business is nobody's business, we will insure for the future a stability in municipal and private business relations which will command the respect not only of the citizens of our city but of the citizens of the world, and *this respect means credit!*"

My Town— What Can I Do to Boost Its Credit?

Prize-winning essay
in National Municipal
League's university
student contest

LEON S. SMELO

University of Pennsylvania

AMERICA has 175,000 varied municipalities. Each has its peculiar civic status; no two correspond in the nature of their financial problems, in the magnitude of their resources and liabilities, and in the capacity and integrity of their administrations. For me, the individual citizen, the boosting of my town's credit is a question which in its broadest sense goes far beyond these local differences. Further, it transcends any sporadic demand for retrenchment, for more economy, and for greater efficiency in the face of some drastic financial crisis which must be met. Wherever my town may be, whatever the strength of its financial structure, the improvement of its credit in the ultimate analysis rests squarely upon an enlightened interest and an intelligent participation by the general citizenry in local government. No corruption and waste, no degeneration of credit, no municipal default has ever come to that town whose citizens were truly aware of the vital necessity to them of local governmental services, were keenly alert to the tremendous difficulties confronting their elected officials, and were sincerely eager to do their part in shouldering and solving these municipal problems. To promote this character of citizenship by personal example and through the use of my influence is what I can best do to boost the credit of my town.

Citizens of such stamp must surely

recognize that the intricacies of municipal administration—with all its diverse services, complex personnel, social aspects, and involved finances—demand a staff of directors and employees of special training and experience. Such a group of citizens will inevitably choose representatives possessed of the capacity, the honesty, and the vision to map out the broad policies to be followed by the underlying administrative departments, without dictating the manner of execution. In short, from an alert, "government-minded" electorate there must come a municipal administration responsive to public wishes and functioning at a high pitch of efficiency. What banker would refuse to lend funds to a town so managed?

There, at least, a passing depression would find no hysterical clamor for a reckless slashing of budgets to the point of abandonment of all the scientific, social, and educational enterprises of government. Such destructive economy might prevent default but it does not enhance credit. That town would clearly see that municipal and private credit alike are based upon a demonstrated administrative efficiency which has proved its power to adequately meet all present and future obligations. There, one would note in times of prosperity a policy which built up credit reserves in anticipation of possible need and emergency, not a heedless extravagance which committed 50 or 60 per

cent of expected future income to the payment of debt. And true government efficiency would be valued at its full worth, not overlooked while a few mistakes paraded the headlines. Clearly enough, such a town would enjoy the highest credit rating.

Far more vital, however, would be sharp appreciation of the fact, by both officials and voters, that all municipal funds, and consequently all municipal credit, have their source in the ability and in the willingness of each inhabitant to pay his tax bill. No matter how well and honestly managed a government may be, it cannot go on, it must fail, if there be no revenue forthcoming from those whom it serves. In the words of Glenn Frank, "the staggering deficits that have confronted local, state, and national governments since the collapse of 1929 have been due less to the rise in the cost of public services than to the drop in the public income." Fundamentally, then, the credit of a town springs from the work and wages of its people. There can be no separation of public welfare and municipal credit. In the last analysis, that city administration whose sincere purpose is the promotion of widespread social and economic betterment will do most to establish an enduring and impregnable municipal credit.

President Roosevelt told his Dutchess County neighbors:

"The greater part of government, as

it affects your daily lives and mine, is your local government.

The opportunity in this field of local government for improvement, for a betterment that will be felt in your lives, is just as great as it is in Washington."

The fulfillment of this local opportunity is what can best be done to boost the credit—and the happiness—of my town. And this opportunity can only be fulfilled through an enlightened interest and an intelligent participation in government by me and by my fellow townsmen.

In practical terms, it is for me and others of like persuasion to band together in fostering the spirit and quality of good government. We must stimulate a community "government-mindedness" through the many agencies and with all the vigor at our disposal. The local press, the district schools, the town library, authoritative guest speakers, debates, and radio addresses must all be actively and properly utilized to bring social and political problems forcefully before our people. Beyond dispute, we have at hand the means to produce an electorate at once intelligent, vibrant to public questions, and truly eager for good, honest, representative government. It is for me and for my fellow citizens to do our full share in giving our town that type of electorate. In direct measure as we succeed its credit will go up and all of its humanitarian standards will rise.



The Worries of 1500 City Officials

New sources of revenue and financial administration problems turn hair of city fathers gray these days

HAROLD I. BAUMES

*Municipal Reference Bureau, League of
Virginia Municipalities*

IF ALL municipal officials had the opportunity to request freely any information they desired to assist them in solving administrative difficulties, an analysis of the information provided would give a fair comprehensive indication of what the problems of municipal officials today really are. This opportunity is actually provided in Virginia through the Municipal Reference Bureau of the League of Virginia Municipalities of whose facilities an increased use is made each year. One of the delegates from the United States to the International Congress of Local Authorities in London last year remarked upon his return: "We were surprised to find that the problems of Alexandria, Egypt, were practically the same as those of Alexandria, Virginia." Authorities seem to be agreed that municipal problems are similar the world over. With this in mind it was thought that an analysis of the relative importance of questions raised by officials as gauged by the number of times information was transmitted from this office in Virginia might be a fairly accurate indication of the relative importance of various administrative problems in other states. Such an analysis should show also the relative need for assistance from established research agencies which have the confidence and coöperation of their officials. It should be explained at the outset that the

Municipal Reference Bureau is the instrument of the officials themselves and since it is supported and directed by them, it is entirely natural that free use is made of its facilities upon occasion.

Much has been written and said about unemployment relief and tax delinquency during the past two years for the very obvious reason that these questions have been of paramount importance in every city, town, village, and borough. However, because of their prominence in current publications one may erroneously gain the impression that these problems preclude all others or make the others insignificant. The records of the Municipal Reference Bureau show conclusively that this is not so. As a matter of fact, of all the information sent out during the year ending February 1, 1933, neither of these subjects ranked first as far as the frequency of their occurrence was concerned although both held prominent places.

During those twelve months, 1,512 pieces of information were mailed or telephoned from the Bureau, most of them at the request of a city or town official. Of this number, 248 or 16 per cent, concerned the subject of license taxes. Information was requested on this subject more frequently than on any other. Problems most frequently occurring, listed in the order of the

number of requests received, were as follows:

	Per cent
License taxes	16.4
Municipal finance	13.9
Miscellaneous information	10.9
League services	9.7
Personnel training facilities	9.3
Unemployment relief	9.0
Utility regulation and management	8.6
Salaries	4.1
State legislation affecting municipalities	4.0
Charters and ordinances ..	3.4
Police administration	2.3
Inspectional services	2.0
Legal opinions	1.8
Problem of organization and administration	1.6
Planning and zoning	1.2
Refuse collection and disposal	1.1
Traffic control	0.7

LICENSE TAXES

Virginia municipalities, in keeping with the practice of those in many other southern states, secure a substantial revenue annually from various kinds of license taxes including business and occupation taxes, and during this period of rapidly changing financial conditions and constant clamoring for reduced taxes, naturally more than usual consideration has been given to license taxes not only as an important source of revenue but as to more equitable assessment as well. Questions on license taxes vary from a request for the amount assessed on one source in a certain municipality to a request for comparative analyses of entire license tax codes for several municipalities.

It may be contended by some that this question of license taxes has indirectly a bearing on unemployment and tax delinquency as do some of the

other problems listed above. To the extent that additional revenue is secured as a result of the inquiries received and changes made in the license codes this may be true, but the nature of the questions also indicates a more critical analysis of the whole subject of license tax administration including interpretation of laws and ordinances, model license forms, and equitable assessments in keeping with an apparent desire to improve public administration generally.

INTEREST IN FINANCES

The next problem most frequently challenging municipal officials concerns financial administration and includes such phases of the subject as per capita indebtedness, bond retirements, interest rates, tax rates, tax delinquency, appropriations, sources of revenue, and practically all conceivable component parts of the whole subject of the financial administration of cities and towns.

While most Virginia cities have developed a fairly standard budgetary system which has been in use for several years, not infrequently counsel is sought concerning improved budget forms and budgetary accounting procedure. Emphasis is placed also on the proper and equitable allocation of tax money, a considerable amount of material being prepared showing various operation costs. Requests for purchasing information have been rather numerous during the past year and indicate a growing realization on the part of officials of the importance of scientific purchasing of materials, supplies, and services. Prices paid for various products are mailed upon request to city and town officials and the focusing of attention on this important municipal function has led to the inauguration by the League of Virginia Municipalities of a purchasing information service similar to that which has been extended so successfully in New York State.

Complete information and consulting service is available to any officials who may desire to establish a centralized purchasing division or to improve their purchasing procedure in other ways.

The third subject in the list above embraces numerous miscellaneous problems many of which are of the utmost importance but none of which occur frequently. They vary from technical phases of jail construction to the advisability of painting the inside of water towers, from stream pollution to the management of airports, and from office hours to slaughter houses.

SERVICE AND PERSONNEL

Another problem most frequently confronted concerns the activities and services of the League of Virginia Municipalities and includes such questions as services rendered, committee reports, membership data and the usual questions involved in the operation of an active organization. The next subject, personnel training, is somewhat analogous, but merits separate analysis because of the volume of information transmitted during the first year personnel training was undertaken on a state-wide scale for municipal officials. Policemen were the first group to which the training facilities were extended but mature plans have also been made for fire training schools and preliminary consideration has been given to other training schools for various classes of the personnel. These schools have attracted the attention and whole-hearted support of the officials from the start and have been encouraging to those who look forward to an era of expertly equipped municipal personnel. If the training facilities are made available through the municipal employees themselves and not superimposed upon them, much benefit will be derived from them.

Unemployment appears sixth on the list and as expected, occupies an im-

portant place in the array of challenging problems. The information requested covers many phases of relief work but most numerous are such questions as relief standards, family budgets, public and private appropriations, and the organization of relief agencies. Numerous requests were also received for advice and assistance in qualifying for and receiving Reconstruction Finance Corporation funds to supplement local relief activities. Many administrative problems arise in this connection requiring knowledge of the experience of other political units and technical recommendations and assistance. The proper handling of this activity has meant much to thousands of people who for the first time in their lives have been forced by circumstances beyond their control, to accept public assistance. It has been perhaps the one problem above all others which has required immediate solution to avert actual disaster and perhaps the destruction of the very foundations of democracy.

The next problem of significance confronting our officials concerns utilities and is of ever-increasing importance during this period when citizens and officials alike are expressing themselves in favor of more adequate regulation of utility services and rates. The need for decreasing municipal costs has brought to light a similar need for lower utility rates with substantial savings to consumers who are also our taxpayers. Officials are realizing the importance of economies in utility services which have come to be so essential to modern life and are actively protecting the public interest, often working at serious disadvantages because of inadequate state legislation or lax regulatory activity on the part of public service bodies. Greater emphasis is also placed on the proper drawing of franchises to protect the interests of the municipality.

Space will not permit a detailed ex-

planation of the significance of the other problems frequently confronting municipal officials. Each of the remaining ones in the list above comprised less than 5 per cent of the total requests received for information or technical assistance but nevertheless they recurred frequently and are a matter of great concern. Attention should be directed, however, to the fact that charter changes are often made during the biennial state legislative sessions and copies of city charters and codes of ordinances are often requested by municipalities contemplating constructive changes. Complete information of this character is maintained at League headquarters and technical assistance is provided in the drawing of new charters and in the revamping of old ones. Perhaps not as many questions of this kind are received as would be expected, because of the similarity of many council-manager charters in Virginia cities. These are found in well over one half of the cities. Assistance is given also in numerous instances in drawing ordinances to cover a new situation or problem.

An analysis of the services requested by Virginia officials during the past year indicates that they have been confronted with many new problems which they either have never dealt with before or which have now reached such magnitude that a more intensive study is necessary than it is possible for any official to give and perform his routine duties simultaneously. This appears to be a natural result of the trying period through which we are passing. At the same time, however, increasing emphasis is being directed to the administration of established functions of government more efficiently and more economically. Indeed, it is probably

true that citizens are now getting a better governmental service and more for their tax dollar than ever before. It is this that has caused taxpayers recently to recognize that of all businesses and activities, government is most indispensable and necessary to their happiness and welfare.

Undoubtedly many states will find that their municipal officials are perplexed with much the same administrative questions as have just been enumerated; municipal problems are similar the world over. The conclusion has been adequately substantiated in Virginia that officials are conscientiously, and, in many cases, heroically striving to administer municipal affairs efficiently, economically, and to the best interests of the electorate. They will study the experience of their colleagues under similar circumstances and they will coöperate in a constructive endeavor to improve public administration and to bring it to a high plane of efficiency. They have been the target of destructive criticism in many instances and the taunts of those who would place profit before service, but they have in most instances faced the problems of administration fairly and are eager to secure accurate facts and competent assistance from respected sources whether it be through a co-operative organization like a League of Municipalities or from other organizations with worthy objectives and employing constructive practices.

These are the vital problems confronting municipal administrators today. The constructive approach to challenging questions through technical and professional organizations of officials themselves can do much to promote the best interests of our citizens.

Annual Appraisal of Municipal Reports

Berkeley, Cal., heads
list with rating of 95;
Cincinnati and Wich-
ita next

BY CLARENCE E. RIDLEY

The University of Chicago

The year 1933 brought forth a total of thirteen municipal reports considered worthy of reviewing in this journal as compared with ten in 1932. The cities with brief comments on their reports follow:

Berkeley, California. (82,109) 70 pp. Rating 95. This report has about everything a model report should have—attractiveness, well chosen illustrations, and an informative letter of transmittal which emphasizes important facts. The number of employees and total expenditures are given at the beginning of each departmental report. Length and lateness in appearing prevent an almost perfect report.

Cincinnati, Ohio. (451,160) 64 pp. Rating 93. Unique in the character of its charts, maps, and pictures, and their distribution throughout the report. Commendable also are the letter of transmittal and the impressive manner of presenting the outstanding accomplishments.

Wichita, Kansas. (111,110) 70 pp. Rating 92. A very attractive report. Exception must be taken with its length and the omission of a letter of transmittal. Commendable are its charts and well-chosen pictures. A change of type emphasizes the important facts.

Albert Lea, Minnesota. (10,169) 24 pp. Rating 91. Although of vest-pocket size this report presents practically all the facts regarding the city government about which a normal citizen would be interested. Several pictures depicting city activities and a few charts indicating trends in fire, health, police, and similar activities, add to its attractiveness. It is unique in that it was distributed two weeks after the close of the period covered.

Austin, Texas. (53,120) 74 pp. Rating 89. Rates high in physical make-up, only fair in illustrative material, too long, and low on comparative statistics.

Auburn, Maine. (18,571) 44 pp. Rating 88. In general a good report but is weak on physical make-up and only fair on charts and pictures; yet it rates fairly high on composition.

Lexington, Kentucky. (45,736) 38 pp. Rating 86. Main criticism is its shortage of illustrative material, but rates high on physical make-up and content.

Two Rivers, Wisconsin. (10,264) 52 pp. Rating 85. Came out more than five months after the end of the period covered, is a bit weak on comparative statistics but otherwise a very commendable report.

Kenosha, Wisconsin. (50,262) 114 pp. Rating 83. General make-up and illustrative material good, much too long and very late in getting published—five months after end of period covered.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (578,249) 165 pp. Rating 83. Only serious criticisms of this report are its length and the omission of an administrative organization chart. Otherwise this report is one of the best of the year.

Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin. (5,793) 40 pp. Rating 81. Main criticism is lateness in appearance—more than ten months after end of period covered. It fails to emphasize important facts adequately and is a bit weak on comparative data, otherwise a good report.

Oregon City, Oregon. (5,761) 51 pp. Rating 77. This is a good report except that it does not emphasize important facts and is very deficient on illustrative material.

Tucson, Arizona. (32,506) 46 pp. Rating 69. Main criticisms are lateness in appearance—nearly eight months after the end of period covered, omission of illustrative material, table of contents, and organization chart. In other respects it is quite commendable.

WORTHY OF MENTION

Reports issued by cities other than those named above and worthy of mention include: Alliance, Nebraska; Atchison, Kansas; Brewer, Belfast, and Bangor, Maine; Carlisle and Northampton, Pennsylvania; East Cleveland, Ohio; Kenilworth and Winnetka, Illinois; Tallahassee, Florida; and Rhineland, Wisconsin.

TABLE I
COMPARATIVE RATINGS OF MUNICIPAL REPORTS

Explanation.—The number “5” denotes approach to an acceptable standard, while “0” indicates the value on that particular criterion to be practically negligible. Intervening numbers denote the degree of variation between these two extremes. A total of 100 would indicate a perfect score.

Criteria	Albert Lea, Minnesota	Auburn, Maine	Austin, Texas	Berkeley, California	Cincinnati, Ohio	Ft. Atkinson, Wisconsin	Kenosha, Wisconsin	Lexington, Kentucky	Milwaukee, Wisconsin	Oregon City, Oregon	Tucson, Arizona	Two Rivers, Wisconsin	Wichita, Kansas
I. Date of Publication													
1. Promptness	5	4	4	3	3	0	1	4	3	3	0	1	4
II. Physical Make-up													
2. Size	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
3. Paper and type	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5
4. Important facts	4	3	4	5	4	2	3	4	3	2	3	4	5
5. Attractiveness	3	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	5
III. Content													
A. Illustrative Material													
6. Diagrams and charts	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	2	5	2	4	4	5
7. Maps and pictures	5	4	4	5	5	3	4	4	5	3	0	4	5
8. Distribution	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
B. Composition													
9. Table of contents	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	5	5
10. Organization chart	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	5	0	5	5
11. Letter of transmittal	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	3	4	4	3
12. Recommendations and accomplishments	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	2	4	4	4
13. Length	5	5	4	4	4	5	2	5	0	4	5	4	4
14. Literary style	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5
15. Arrangement	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	4	5	5
16. Balanced content	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5
17. Statistics	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4
18. Comparative data	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	4
19. Financial statements	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
20. Propaganda	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Totals	91	88	89	95	93	81	83	86	83	77	69	85	92

BASES OF APPRAISAL

The twenty criteria upon which the grading of these twelve reports was based are:

I. DATE OF PUBLICATION

1. *Promptness.*—The report will have little value unless published soon after the end of the period covered—six weeks as a maximum.

II. PHYSICAL MAKE-UP

2. *Size.*—Convenient for reading and filing, preferably 6" x 9".

3. *Paper and type.*—Paper should be of such a grade and the type of such size and character as to be easily read.

4. *Important facts.*—The more important facts should be emphasized by change of type or by artistic presentation.

5. *Attractiveness.*—The cover, title, introduction, and general appearance should aim to attract the reader and encourage further examination.

III. CONTENT

A. *Illustrative Material*

6. *Diagrams and charts.*—Certain established rules should be followed to insure an accurate and effective presentation.

7. *Maps and pictures.*—A few well-chosen maps to indicate certain improvements, and a liberal supply of pictures, pertinent to the report, should be included.

8. *Distribution*.—Great care should be exercised in placing the illustrative material contiguous to the relevant reading material.

B. Composition

9. *Table of contents*.—A short table of contents in the front of the report is a great aid for ready reference.

10. *Organization chart*.—An organization chart or table indicating the services rendered by each unit, if placed in the front of the report, will help the reader to a clearer understanding of what follows.

11. *Letter of transmittal*.—A short letter of transmittal which either contains or is followed by a summary of outstanding accomplishments and recommendations for the future should open the report.

12. *Recommendations and accomplishments*.—A comparison of past recommendations with the progress toward their execution will serve as an index to the year's achievements.

13. *Length*.—Fifty pages should be the maximum length.

14. *Literary style*.—The text should be clear and concise, reflecting proper attention to grammar, sentence structure, and diction.

15. *Arrangement*.—The report of the various governmental units should correlate with the organization structure, or follow some other logical arrangement.

16. *Balanced content*.—The material should show a complete picture, and each activity should occupy space in proportion to its relative importance.

17. *Statistics*.—Certain statistics must be included, but wherever appropriate, they should be supplemented by simple diagrams or charts.

18. *Comparative data*.—The present year's accomplishments should be compared with those of previous years, but only with full consideration of all factors involved.

19. *Financial statements*.—Three or four financial statements should be included, showing amount expended and the means of financing each function and organization unit.

20. *Propaganda*.—It is unethical and in poor taste to include material for departmental or personal aggrandizement. Photographs of officials, especially of administrators, seem out of place in a public report.

COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEARS

A few cities have shown quite a consistent improvement during the last several years as is shown by Table II.

TABLE II

City	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
Austin, Texas	54	65	81	82	88	89
Auburn, Maine			72	69	88	89
Cincinnati, Ohio	83	87	89	89	93	93
Kenosha, Wisconsin	79	68	79	79	79	83
Two Rivers, Wisconsin	67	78	84	86	92	85
Wichita, Kansas			68	72	92	92
Average Rating	71	74	79	80	89	89

Table III below compares the appraisal of all municipal reports reviewed in these columns for the past seven years according to certain characteristics.

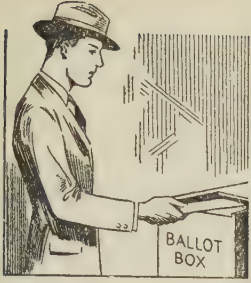
TABLE III

	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
Number of Reports Reviewed	12	17	20	16	14	10	13
Average Length (pages)	90	78	90	60	72	75	66
Promptness in Issuing Report (in months)	4.5	3.7	4.7	4.1	3.7	3.2	4.1
Physical Make-up (per cent)	78	78	82	86	81	82	87
Illustrative Material (per cent)	62	58	65	74	74	83	87
Composition (per cent)	64	66	72	79	85	89	87

From the data herein we learn that while the length of the reports tends to be more brief, their physical make-up more attractive and illustrative material of better quality, these favorable factors are offset in part by a lack of promptness in publication, and a noticeable decline in composition.

Admittedly the annual report is only one means of keeping the public informed and it may not be the most effective at that. It is true, however, that the officials of most cities issue no type of report of value to the general public and this gross failure accounts in a large measure for the unjust criticism of the public official during recent years.





PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

EDITED BY GEORGE H. HALLETT, JR.

Continuing the Proportional Representation Review Sixteen Years of P. R. in Boulder

BY DON C. SOWERS

Secretary of the Bureau of Business and Government Research at the University of Colorado
and Secretary-Treasurer of the Colorado Municipal League
(Reprinted by Permission of the *Boulder Daily Camera*)

This article, though prepared primarily for local consumption, should be of interest to students of proportional representation everywhere, both because of its evidence of the value of the principle in controversial situations and because of those aspects of Boulder's experience which suggest a somewhat different method of application. We have kept the introductory paragraphs as a good summary statement on the history of the P. R. movement.—Editor's Note.

The Hare system of proportional representation was devised by an Englishman, Thomas Hare, a barrister of London who published in 1857 a pamphlet explaining proportional representation with the single transferable vote and advocating its use. Various refinements and improvements have since been made. In 1867 John Stuart Mill, the noted English economist, spoke in favor of the adoption of the system in the House of Commons. Among the supporters of the movement in the United States have been such men as John R. Commons, William Dudley Foulke, Charles Francis Adams, Alfred Cridge, A. R. Hatton and others.

Proportional representation has been used with satisfying results over a period of years for the election of municipal councils in the United States, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, and in hundreds of municipalities in the countries of Northern and Western Europe. In the Irish Free State it is used for all important elections. In the countries of Northern Europe the principle is used almost

universally in parliamentary elections¹ and public elections, although the particular methods used in these countries give less freedom of choice to the individual voter than the Hare system, which is favored in English speaking countries. All school boards throughout Scotland use it.

Ashtabula, Ohio, was the first city in the United States to adopt P. R. for public elections in 1915. Boulder was the second American city to adopt it and today enjoys the distinction of having had the system in operation longer than any other American city. Kalamazoo, Michigan, and Sacramento adopted P. R. and retained it until it was declared unconstitutional by the courts. West Hartford, Connecticut, used it in 1921 and 1922 until the legislature passed a law prohibiting its use in municipal elections. It was used for 5 elections in Cleveland until the recent close defeat of the city manager plan in that city. It has been used with strikingly beneficial results in Cincinnati in the last four municipal elections. Civic leaders give the Hare system full credit for the overthrow of the notorious political machine in that city and for the maintenance of the forces of good government in power. Hamilton, Ohio, adopted the plan in 1926

¹Except that it has recently been abolished by the Nazi dictatorship in Germany. See the editorial in this department for August, 1933.—Ed.

and has successfully defended three attacks against it made by dispossessed politicians. At present Boulder, Cincinnati and Hamilton are the only American cities having the system in operation. It is being seriously considered in New York City, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Portland, Oregon, and Seattle.

What It Is

Proportional representation is a method of electing public bodies which gives every group of like-minded voters the same share of members elected that it has of the votes cast. It insures majority rule and minority representation. Each voter is given a single transferable vote; he can express alternative choices so that his vote will not be wasted on a candidate who does not need it or cannot use it.

The Hare System in Boulder

The Hare system has been used in Boulder since 1917, a period of sixteen years. Three councilmen are elected every two years for six-year terms. The first three elections, 1917, 1919, and 1921, were practically devoid of issues. Preferences were based upon persons rather than programs.

In 1923, opposition to the operation of the city manager plan of government crystallized in a charter amendment to return to the old mayor-council form of government and to abolish the Hare system. At a special election held on April 10, 1923, the manager plan and the Hare system were decisively sustained. The vote for the amendment was 1,340. Against the amendment, 2,730. Nineteen ballots were void.

At the November election of that year there was a clear partisan alignment among the candidates. Two candidates represented the opposition to the charter and three candidates represented the charter supporters. The anti-charter candidates received 42 per cent of the valid first choices and the charter supporters' candidates received 58 per cent. The former group elected one councilman and the latter two councilmen, thus giving each group representation on the council in proportion to their strength.

In the election of November 1925 this amendment, defeated in April 1923, was again proposed and again defeated. The vote was 1,284 in favor and 1,709 against.

The third attempt to abolish the Hare system was made in November 1933, and the

proposition was again decisively defeated. The vote was 1,216 in favor and 1,776 against or practically the same as the vote in 1925.

In 1923, Walter J. Millard of the Proportional Representation League was sent to Boulder by his organization to do such educational work on the Hare system as opportunity might allow. In 1933 friends of the charter and supporters of the Hare system invited George Hallett, Jr., of the Proportional Representation League to come to Boulder for the purpose of explaining the system to the voters. This was done because the friends of the system were too busy and too inexperienced in conducting educational campaigns to undertake the task. As a result of this educational work many good citizens who had come to harbor doubts as to the value of the system were again convinced of its merits.

Spoiled Ballots

Perhaps the most common objection raised against the operation of the Hare system in Boulder is the large percentage of invalid ballots. The most common errors are those of marking a cross before each of three names and of marking the numeral one before each of three names.

An analysis of all the elections for councilmen since the system has been in operation, with respect to the number of spoiled ballots shows great variations. It was not possible in every case to separate the number of spoiled ballots from the blank ballots. This information is available for the years 1925 and 1933. In 1925 the percentage of spoiled ballots was 6.42. In 1933 the percentage was 10.90. These percentages compare favorably with the experience of other American cities with the Hare system, in which the invalid ballots amount to from 2.4 to 10.9 per cent. . . .

The table indicates that the voters have at several elections used the Hare system quite successfully as shown by the small percentage of invalid ballots. The large percentage of invalid ballots in 1919, 1923, and 1929 may possibly be explained on the theory that either a deliberate attempt was made by some voters to discredit the system or that the voters become confused when a large number of amendments or special issues are presented. In 1925 the election judges stated

TOTAL VOTES, SPOILED AND BLANK VOTES AND PER CENT OF VOTES SPOILED AND BLANK
AT COUNCILMANIC ELECTIONS

Date	Total Votes	Spoiled Votes	Blank Votes	Total Spoiled and Blank	Per Cent Spoiled and Blank	Per Cent Spoiled Only
December, 1917						
For 2 year term	859			56	6.51	
For 4 year term	859			63	7.33	
For 6 year term	859			58	6.75	
November, 1919	1,165			275	23.69	
November, 1921	838			73	8.71	
November, 1923	1,995			378	18.94	
November, 1925	3,094	195	413	608	19.61	6.42
November, 1927	2,300			154	6.70	
November, 1929	2,957			811	27.40	
November, 1931	1,391			57	4.10	
November, 1933	3,496	381	54	435	12.44	10.90

that this appeared to be the case because most of the void votes were on the ballots cast for the amendments. In 1929 a large percentage of the ballots cast for the four charter amendments submitted at that time were void as, for example, the amendment concerning the park fund had 11.56 percentage of void ballots and the amendment to increase the tax levy had 18.16 percentage of void ballots.²

An analysis of the spoiled and blank ballots by wards and precincts shows great variations in the percentage of invalid ballots . . . The figures suggest that a program for the education of the voter in the methods of voting should be carried on in Wards 1 and 4 if the number of invalid votes is to be reduced. It might also be well to change the directions to voters on the ballot so as to include as part of the directions to voters an actual marked ballot with fictitious names. This might be more effective than several lines of printed matter. This is actually done in Calgary with good results.

Effect of Alphabetical Arrangement of Names

Another objection frequently expressed is that position of names on ballots gives a decided advantage to the person whose name appears at the top of the list and that individuals whose names begin with letters in the lower section of the alphabet have a poor chance of election.

²Under the old plan of election, of course. The ballots of those who simply did not care to vote this part of the ballot were presumably included, as were the ballots of those who did not care to vote the P. R. part in making up the "invalid" total under P. R.—Ed.

It is interesting to note that of the 71 candidates who have run for elections to the city council since 1917, 40 had names beginning A to H and 30 of the 33 persons elected had names beginning A to H.

There have been 10 candidates whose names began with M and of these three were elected. No candidate has ever been elected whose name began with a letter in the last half of the alphabet. . . .

The importance of position on the ballot is also shown by the fact that in every election thus far held for the six-year term for councilmen in Boulder the person whose name appeared first on the ballot was elected. In five elections the person whose name appeared second on the ballot was elected. In four elections the person whose name appeared fourth was elected. In one election the person whose name appeared fifth on the ballot was elected.

In order to give each candidate the same advantage of position on the ballot it is suggested that the charter be amended to provide for a rotation of names on the ballots to provide that in printing the ballots the name of each candidate shall appear at the head of the list on the same number of printed ballots as every other candidate. This is the plan followed in many states.³

The November 1933 Election

At the recent election a clear cut issue was presented to the voters. The issue was the desirability of having a thorough investigation of the electric light and gas rates in Boulder preparatory to action by the council on the readjustment of rates under

³It is followed under P. R. in Cincinnati and Hamilton, Ohio.—Ed.

the terms of the franchise of the public service company which will come up for consideration in 1934. Several candidates publicly declared themselves on this issue.

F. D. Bramhall⁴ was the chief proponent of such an investigation. . . . Bramhall received 1,184 votes or 33.9⁵ per cent of all votes cast and his strength was well distributed throughout every precinct in the city, ranging from a low of 24 per cent of all votes in one precinct to a high of 44 per cent in two precincts.

Mayor H. H. Heuston, a candidate for re-election,⁶ received 794 votes or 22.7 per cent of the total vote cast. His votes also were well distributed throughout the city. . . . Messrs. Bramhall and Heuston were elected on the first count. Each had more first choices than the quota required for election, which was 766.

The next step in counting the ballots was to transfer the surplus ballots above the quota in accordance with the second choices indicated thereon. Bramhall's 418 surplus ballots were transferred first. . . .

One of the surprises of the election was that A. D. Coleman, who had not publicly declared himself on the campaign issue, received a larger number of Bramhall's second choices (90) than any other candidate.⁷ . . .

The soundness of the principles of proportional representation was demonstrated in this election. A majority of like-minded persons through their expressed first, second or more choices succeeded in electing two persons whom they considered were committed to an investigation of the electric light and power rates. The minority group

secured representation through the re-election of Mayor Heuston. The place of residence of the candidate had practically no bearing on the votes cast for candidates. The controlling factor was their expressed or assumed attitude on the vital issue presented in the campaign.

The principles of proportional representation could be worked out more ideally if a larger number of councilmen were elected at each election.

If all nine councilmen were elected at the same time it would give opportunity for much more complete representation of the city than is possible when only three are elected and would make the council at all times the product of the latest expression of popular will. The continuity provided by overlapping terms would be provided automatically since a considerable percentage of the old councilmen would run for re-election and would be re-elected. . . .

Representative Councils

The following table, prepared independently of Mr. Sowers' article, shows that Boulder's restriction of the number elected each time to three has not prevented P. R. from giving a completeness of representation that would have been quite impossible under the older plurality methods. The figures in the first column are in fact an understatement. Candidates are only credited with enough votes to insure their election but they may actually represent many more voters who have voted for them, as the figures underlined in the second column strikingly show.

ANALYSIS OF VALID BALLOTS

BOULDER COUNCIL ELECTIONS, 1917-1933

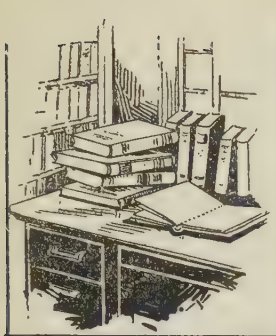
Year	Percentage of Voters	
	Who Helped Elect Members	Who Saw First Choice Elected
1917	73	63
1919	75	89
1921	75	76
1923	75	74
1925	75	87
1927	70	62
1929	74	74
1931	73	68
1933	69	74

⁴Professor of Political Science at the University of Colorado.—Ed.

⁵38.7% of the valid vote.—Ed.

⁶Under Boulder's city manager charter the mayor is the president of the council without administrative duties, chosen by the council from its own number. Mayor Heuston was identified with the utility side of the controversy by his position as company physician.—Ed.

⁷We have omitted here the further details of the count, which led to the election of Coleman through the transfer to him as next choice of a large part of the ballots of Kirby and Perry—both like Bramhall committed to the investigation—when they were defeated. The transfers left no doubt that the voters considered Coleman on the side of the investigation, though he had not said so in public.—Ed.



RECENT BOOKS REVIEWED

EDITED BY EDNA TRULL

City Management—The Cincinnati Experiment. By Charles P. Taft. New York, Farrar & Rinehart, 1933. \$2.50.

The story of Cincinnati has long needed telling. Its outlines have been heralded from coast to coast. There is probably not a city in the nation which has not heard of the magic transformation of the Ohio municipality from one of the most corrupt and worst governed cities in the nation to a city which today proudly flaunts the slogan, "the best governed city in America." But as to how the transformation was accomplished, through what exertion of human energy the change was brought about, the importance of the various factors in the situation, and the results—this has long required the setting forth in a written record of the experience from its early beginnings.

Charles P. Taft, who as one of the original crusaders, albeit somewhat skeptical at first as to the manager plan itself, lived through the hopes and fears of those early days to see the realization in greater measure than their fondest dreams, tells a moving, exciting story. If it is applied political science, then that subject takes on an aura of adventure and romance that many teachers of the subject, reaching to dusty shelves for their materials, have sadly neglected.

Cincinnati is of course the Mecca of the new reformers. Long before the "New Deal" became a popular byword for the present federal administration, Louis Brownlow and others were talking about the "new deal at the city hall" of which Cincinnati was at once the laboratory and the exemplification. Cincinnati has achieved that peculiar combination of efficient administration, citizen interest in government and response to public opinion

that represents the goal of democracy. As Richard S. Childs would say, in Cincinnati "democracy democs!"

The credit for the Cincinnati achievement has been the subject of considerable discussion among those who have been interested in causes and effects. The city manager plan, proportional representation, the City Charter Committee, the brilliant campaign personality of Murray Seasongood, the two city managers—to each of these has been attributed the success of the Cincinnati experiment. If it was not obvious before, Mr. Taft's book brings into clear relief the fact that it was a happy combination of these elements that made the achievement possible. Cincinnati's unique contribution is the City Charter Committee, of which Henry Bentley has been the guiding genius. To this permanent organization—a non-political machine—goes much of the credit for the high caliber of the personnel of Cincinnati's council as well as the credit for defeating in five consecutive elections a political machine earlier credited with being "unbeatable."

The accomplishments under the manager plan, the story of which the National Municipal League has told over and over again, need not be stressed here. Suffice it to say that it is a great record and that anyone interested in municipal government who fails to read this book is doing himself an ill turn. Nay, more, it is a book which should be read by every citizen of cities struggling with problems that seem too vast for human intelligence. There is the full fascinating story of achievement here, its small beginnings, the tremendous obstacles faced, the battle and victory—a King Arthur saga of municipal reform.

As the author concludes his narrative, "this

group of Davids, for all their weakness, were able to overcome Goliath of the Machine, and to establish in Cincinnati and in Hamilton County good government conducted by honest men, with most of the same tools, most of the same employees and the same electorate with which the job had been done so badly by their predecessors. They proved that good government in American cities of substantial size is a possibility."

HOWARD P. JONES.

*

Public Works Inspection in Philadelphia.

By Philip A. Beatty. Philadelphia, Bureau of Municipal Research of Philadelphia, 1933. 32 pp. mimeo.

With the bulk of public construction being done by private contractors, the city's supervision and inspection of the work is fundamental in securing full value for the money paid. Probably no city of any size has completely escaped at least the suspicion of scandal in connection with its public works inspection and the results of this study in Philadelphia will be interesting as well as useful. Mr. Beatty, the engineer on the Bureau's staff, made frequent inspections himself and was satisfied that the work done by the private contractors was, on the whole, of a satisfactory quality. The second part of the problem—whether the city was paying too dearly for this quality of performance—involved the effect upon the price of the inspector on the job as well as the quality and cost of the inspection itself. The results of the investigation of this aspect of the problem are indicated by the recommendations made.

In the author's opinion, public works inspection in Philadelphia could be improved by strengthening the process of selecting inspectors by eliminating political influence and the appointment of provisional inspectors; by providing adequate training in the technicalities and responsibilities of the job; by applying personnel classification and salary standardization already recommended; by discontinuing the practice of gratuities from contractors to inspectors and by reducing the inspector's opportunities for favors to the contractors; by encouraging the organization of inspectors for their own improvement and morale. It is probable that similar principles could well be applied, or justifiably urged, for the numerous governmental agencies which carry on their public works through private contractors.

Welfare Administration in New York State Cities. By Hugh R. Jackson. Albany, New York State Conference of Mayors and Other Municipal Officials, Bureau of Training and Research, 1933. 180 pp. \$1.50.

The New York State Conference of Mayors and the School of Citizenship and Public Affairs of Syracuse University continue their joint supervision of the series of monographs on various phases of municipal practice in New York State. The latest volume, by Hugh R. Jackson, is an opportune description of welfare administration based on personal observation in twenty cities and correspondence with twenty-eight others. With the lay public forced to recognize the problems and techniques of welfare administration, and with professional workers attempting to stretch administrative as well as distribution budgets, the experiences and procedures of this group of New York cities should prove of marked interest.

Mr. Jackson describes administrative factors, such as departmental organization and personnel. He also discusses the policies followed in connection with the several types of relief rendered. A very brief chapter shows the relationship of home relief to work relief. There is a voluminous appendix containing a great many of the forms used. His recommendations, based on the close observance and comparison of practices and methods, should be of considerable value.

*

Real Estate Deflation in Chicago, 1928-1933.—Chicago. Joint Commission on Real Estate Valuation. 11 pp.

In order to correct the 1931 assessments, County Assessor J. L. Jacobs asked several organizations to assist him in determining the effect of the depression on real estate values. The Joint Commission on Real Estate Valuation secured special investigators to collect such facts as would aid Mr. Jacobs. This little booklet embodies the results of the material prepared by Professor H. D. Simpson of Northwestern University. In summary, the figures indicate that the 1931 assessments were 90 per cent of 1931 sales values and 110 per cent of 1932 sales values. Professor Simpson describes the method by which these results were reached and the policies open to the assessor in acting upon them.

Impact of the Depression on Business Activity and Real Income in Minnesota.

Roland S. Vaile, Editor. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1933. 59 pp. Seventy-five cents.

Six members of the University of Minnesota faculty have contributed to this study of changes in business activity, consumption, and the relationship of changes in production and consumption. Particular emphasis is placed on the Twin Cities and Duluth. In his introductory statement Professor Vaile comments on the importance of prompt observation and analysis of the current economic fluctuations. This preliminary study proves its value and interest.

*

Expenditures of Public Money for the Administration of Justice in Ohio 1930.

By Ruth Reticker with the collaboration of Leon C. Marshall. Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1933. 233 pp. \$2.50 paper; \$3.00 cloth.

This is part of the study of the administration of justice in Ohio conducted by the Johns Hopkins Institute of Law, the Judicial Council of Ohio, and the Ohio State Bar Association. This is not the most interesting of the series, but it is extremely useful, and should prove a boon not only to those interested primarily in judicial administration, but also to those who are studying all reports of public expenditures in the hope that they might be reduced.

The author has considered the types of expenditure for the various political units—state, city, county, village, and township, assembled and classified them in admirable fashion. Of the total \$38,500,000 of tax money spent on this function, 44.3 per cent is the share of the city, 35.6 per cent that of the counties, and 16.6 per cent that of the state. Grouping costs by purpose shows 43.1 per cent for police, sheriffs, marshals, etc., 21.1 per cent for courts, 15.2 per cent for correctional institutions, 7 per cent for the maintenance of buildings, and 4.7 per cent for legal offices. The book is devoted to the presentation and explanation of the data contributing to these summaries.

*

Photostatic Recording of Legal Documents. By the Taxpayers' Research League of Delaware. Wilmington, 1933. 7 pp. mimeo.

The New Castle County Bar Association, in its consideration of the possible adoption of the method of photostatic recording, raised questions as to the necessary storage space and ease of reading such copies. The Taxpayers' Research League undertook to answer the questions by obtaining opinions from a number of governments in which the method is in use. The opinions are given in this report.

*

Proceedings of the Southern Branch American Public Health Association. New York, American Public Health Association, 1933. 100 pp. 50 cents.

In November, 1932, there was organized at Birmingham, Alabama, the Southern Branch of the American Public Health Association. The subsequent meetings of this new organization proceeded to discuss health problems peculiar to the southern states and general public health problems in relationship to that area. This volume covers the proceedings of the organization and technical sessions.

*

Police and Firemen's Pension Funds of the City of Buffalo, N. Y. By Buffalo Municipal Research Bureau. Buffalo, 1933. 26 pp. mimeo.

For several years the pension studies produced seemed to emphasize the fact that many plans were not actuarially sound and would not survive the increasing charges against them. Recent studies—such as this made in Buffalo last spring—emphasize the growing demands made on the public by pension funds at a time when other expenditures are being curtailed. The crux of the situation in Buffalo may be summarized in this statement “. . . the maximum annual pension cost . . . instead of . . . 8 per cent will be 22.8 per cent of the annual payroll of the two departments, of which cost the members will contribute a sum equal to 4 per cent of the said payroll and the public a sum equal to 18.8 per cent thereof.” The necessity of revising such systems (or one which permits Mayor O'Brien to retire on a \$14,993 annual pension from a fund into which he has contributed only \$28,000) is likely to have the unfortunate effect of creating popular distrust toward any pension system. The importance of pointing out the facts, however, is unquestioned.

The Constitution and Government of Texas. By Frank M. Stewart and Joseph L. Clark. Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1933. 260 pp. \$1.48.

The authors have thoroughly revised their book of the same title published in 1930. The study has been brought up-to-date by the inclusion of changes in legislative organization and procedure already accomplished, and important proposals for administrative reorganization. Furthermore, three new chapters have been added, covering the essential fields of state finance, educational administration and parties, suffrage and elections. Frequent references are made to recent source material covering local primary sources and the all important report of the Joint Legislative Committee on Organization and Economy—the Griffenhagen survey—which was published last spring.

For those not familiar with the previous work, it may be well to note that the book contains the entire text of the Texas constitution (requiring one-third of the volume), and chapters on the development and amendment of the constitution, the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the government, and local government. Although weaknesses are fully indicated and possible remedies outlined, the book is brief and direct.

*

A Survey Defining the Boundaries of the Cincinnati Region. The Cincinnati Bureau of Governmental Research. Cincinnati, 1933. 73 pp. mimeo.

The importance of intelligent relationships among communities forming a more or less closely knit area has been recognized by Hamilton County. A Committee on Coordination and Cooperation has already been created. As a preliminary to a group of studies to be made in connection with various regional activities, it seemed important to define specifically the area included in the "Cincinnati Region." The region was studied from the point of view of population, density, residence and transportation, trading and distri-

bution areas. Among the details treated are a traffic survey, telephone rates, utility service, fire protection, hospitalization, welfare work, mail, and newspaper service. The survey will doubtless be of great service "when consolidation or reorganization of the numerous governing bodies in the Cincinnati region is considered." It was for this purpose that the study to define the extent of the metropolitan area was undertaken.

*

License Tax Ordinances. American Municipal Association, Chicago, 1933. 21 pp. mimeo. Fifty cents.

Supplementing a previous report on *License Taxes as a Source of Municipal Revenue*, the American Municipal Association has prepared a brief compilation of license tax ordinances. About half the pamphlet is devoted to the three hundred and twenty occupations or objects licensed, for a fee, in Birmingham, Alabama. The license code of Washington, D. C. is presented in condensed form. The St. Louis ordinance, of a somewhat more general nature, is also included. Brief mention is made of license taxes in several other cities. Possible sources of revenue are all of such general interest at this time that this study will undoubtedly be of great value. The simple presentation of these particular facts, however, serves especially to point the need of a thorough analytical study of the subject, which will offer constructive suggestions for future development.

*

Number and Distribution of Social Workers in the United States. By Ralph G. Hurlin, New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1933. 11 pp. Ten cents.

The clue to the content of this small pamphlet is given in the opening sentence—"In 1930, for the first time, the federal census of occupations included in its classification a separate category for social workers." From the data thus available, Dr. Hurlin, director of the Department of Statistics of the Russell Sage Foundation, has made an interesting analysis of the rapidly growing profession.



GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION NOTES

EDITED BY ROBERT M. PAIGE

Secretary-Treasurer, G. R. A.

Governmental Research Association.—

The highly successful meetings held in conjunction with the National Conference on Government have been reported to members in the Association's news letter "Association Business." Most of the papers presented at these meetings will be included in the proceedings which will soon be published in mimeographed form.

At this meeting announcement was made that Herman C. Loeffler, secretary of the Boston Municipal Research Bureau, had been awarded the Governmental Research Association certificate for the preparation of the most noteworthy piece of research during 1933. The report which won the award was entitled "The Participation of Boston in a Public Works Program under the National Industrial Recovery Act." This report was an analysis and constructive criticism of the public works program put forward by the city administration. The members of the Committee on Award were: Leonard D. White, W. F. Willoughby, and Robert T. Crane. This is the first year a competition of this kind has been conducted, but the Association plans to make the award a regular feature of its program of activities.

The following were elected to serve on the Executive Committee during 1934:

Robert M. Goodrich, *Chairman*, (re-elected), Providence Governmental Research Bureau; Philip H. Cornick, Institute of Public Administration; Russell Forbes, New York University; Walter Matscheck, Kansas City Civic Research Institute; Herbert J. Miller, Minneapolis Taxpayers Association; and Donald C. Stone, Public Administration Service.

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Des Moines Bureau of Municipal Research.—A survey of the expenditures made

from the County Court Fund has been completed. The excess of the expenditures over the receipts of this fund has resulted in the issuance of \$304,000 in bonds since 1925. The position of the courts and other offices supported from this fund is now particularly acute due to the fact that the Beatty-Bennett Tax Limit Bill provides for a cut of some 35 per cent in the receipts of this fund. The Bureau admits that the retrenchment indicated cannot be made without materially harming county functions. However, before coöperating in a movement to ask the legislature for relief, the Bureau believes that certain wasteful expenditures should be eliminated. Specifically the Bureau is recommending that improvements in budgetary procedure be adopted, stenographic work of the grand jury and county attorney's office combined, the cost of segregated juries reduced, court reporters' compensation reduced, mileage allowance of sheriff be lowered, and salaries of court employees adjusted.

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Hamilton County Taxpayers League.—

In an effort to improve the unsatisfactory financial practices of the city of Chattanooga, the League has drafted and presented to the City Commission two ordinances. One provides for centralized purchasing. The other provides for a centralized accounting system, increased authority for the city auditor, quarterly allotments, monthly and annual financial reports, and other improvements in the city's financial system.

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Lake County Taxpayers Association, Gary, Indiana.—In a recent bulletin the Association has pointed out that upon poor accounting records must be placed a great deal

of the responsibility for unbalanced budgets and deficits. "When a business concern is forced to curtail, past cost records are scrutinized, anticipated future income is carefully and conservatively estimated, and periodic rearrangements of the budget made. Contrast this with the procedure of the average governmental unit in Indiana which at best can draw up only the haziest kind of complete financial and operating statements and whose books of account, in that they reflect cash transactions only, are many times highly misleading. Accurate departmental costs are almost non-existent. A general ledger is totally unknown in the accounting department of most of Indiana's municipal units. Property and equipment records are noticeable chiefly by their absence and cost accounting does not exist in most places, even in an elementary form. Periodic revisions of the disbursement program are practically never carried out because up-to-date financial reports cannot be obtained."

The Association attributes this backward situation to several causes including the mediocre governmental personnel, the high rate of turnover, "the almost complete lack of legislation in Indiana requiring adequate modern accounting for public funds; and the half-hearted and dilatory tactics employed by state supervisory departments who should furnish progressive leadership in rectifying present conditions." A campaign to correct this situation is under way.

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Citizens League of Cleveland.—The adoption of the County Home Rule Amendment in November opened the way for the complete reorganization of government in the Cleveland metropolitan area. Such reorganization is not dependent upon action by the state legislature but may be initiated and carried through by the citizens of this area alone. The Citizens League has assumed leadership in the campaign to convince voters of the desirability of taking the first step—the authorization and election of a charter committee which will frame a concrete proposal which can then be submitted to the voters for approval or rejection. The entire process will probably take at least two years.

In view of the fact that consolidation of governments in the county under the County-Home Rule Amendment is at least two years away, the report of the League's Committee on

Health is timely. The Committee found that six health authorities are rendering health service within Cuyahoga County, and discovered many facts which point toward the desirability of consolidation. The Committee believes that pending complete consolidation it may be possible to persuade the agencies concerned to merge their activities under a City of Cleveland Health Board and concludes that such a centralized public health administration would result "not only in a more progressive, more efficient, and more satisfactory health service," but that the "same amount of service would be supplied to the citizens of the county at considerably less cost than under the present six separate districts."

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Portland Chamber of Commerce.—The research department has completed a study of tax trends in the eleven western states. The increase (and in most cases the subsequent decrease) in assessed valuations, tax levies, and indebtedness is presented in tabular form. The report reveals many interesting facts, including the fact that in 1930 Oregon was the only western state which had experimented with a personal income tax, but that now Arizona, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, and Utah also have income tax laws; and Oregon, California, Idaho, and Utah tax corporation incomes; and Idaho, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah tax intangibles.

Frank M. Byam, manager of the research department, served the National Municipal League as secretary for Michigan during the time when Clinton Rogers Woodruff was secretary of the League.

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Bureau of Public Administration, University of California.—A member of the staff of the Bureau has completed a survey of unemployment relief administration in the City and County of San Francisco. This survey, which was formally requested by the Board of Supervisors, was made under the direction of a committee appointed by the presidents of the University of California, University of San Francisco, and Leland Stanford University. Changes in the administrative set-up are recommended by the survey staff after a thorough study of existing conditions and the complaints which have been lodged against the present relief administration by citizens, workers, and clients.

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Taxpayers' Research League of Delaware.—Recent and current assignments of the League's research staff include studies and surveys of the following matters: transfer of county roads to state highway system; installation of photostatic recording in office of recorder of New Castle County (report completed); financial statistics of incorporated cities and towns of Delaware (requested by the Delaware Industrial Recovery Survey Commission and the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works); methods of financing state bonds for a public works program (requested by the governor; report completed); state housing law (in cooperation with the State Housing Commission); cost of government in Delaware (requested by Franklin S. Edmunds, president of the National Tax Association and principal speaker at annual meeting of Delaware Bankers' Association); state tax system (requested by State Board of Agriculture); status of Wilmington sinking fund (requested by Wilmington Sinking Fund Commissioners).

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Louisiana Taxpayers Association.—An analysis of the cost of maintenance of the state capitol and a comparison of this cost with similar expenditures in other states have been completed. A very unsatisfactory situation has been revealed.

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Massachusetts Federation of Taxpayers Associations.—Following a successful meeting held in Boston during the latter part of October this new name was adopted to designate the group which during the past year was called the Local Taxpayers' Association of Massachusetts. One hundred and forty-one organizations, representing twenty-nine cities and ninety-three towns are cooperating in the Federation. E. J. Brehaut of the Boston Chamber of Commerce, continues to serve as the secretary of the Federation but clerical and secretarial services are provided by the New England Council. Norman MacDonald director of the Springfield Taxpayers' Association is one of the new members of the executive committee.

The legislative program of the Federation includes the following planks: (1) Amendment of the civil service laws to permit transfer of public employees without right of appeal, to provide that general salary reductions be exempt from the right of appeal, to eliminate the provision for preliminary hearings before department heads in cases of discharge or reduction in pay, and to provide for hearings before a Civil Service Appeal Board instead of the courts; (2) Removal of property tax exemptions now enjoyed by quasi-philanthropic organizations; (3) Establishment of a state agency to assist and advise municipalities; (4) Centralized purchasing prescribed by state law; (5) Increase in the authority of the State Division of Accounts to compel uniformity, simplicity, and promptness in municipal reporting; (6) Abolition of non-contributory pension systems; (7) Revision of state laws which tend to increase the cost of local government; (8) Synchronization of tax year and fiscal year to eliminate necessity for borrowing in anticipation of taxes; (9) A personnel and efficiency survey of the state government; (10) Reexamination of proposals for departmental consolidations made by the 1922 Commission; (11) Transfer to the state of county penal and tuberculosis institutions; (12) Reorganization and centralization of district courts and registries of deeds; (13) Creation of a special tribunal to handle automobile liability cases; (14) An increase in court fees. This program is stated and explained in a printed booklet just published by the Federation.

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Associated Industries of Missouri.—The department of taxation and governmental research recently issued a report on the financial condition of the state government on December 31, 1932. The deficit which existed at that date is computed to be \$1,545,612. After examining tax collection trends and the budget for 1933 and 1934, the department forecasts a deficit of \$1,992,000 on December 31, 1934. This is expected in spite of the fact that appropriations for the biennium 1933-34 were about 16 per cent below expenditures during 1931 and 1932.

Taxation and Government

EDITED BY WADE S. SMITH

Tax Paying Campaigns.—Many municipalities are discovering that if they could collect all unpaid taxes they could substantially reduce next year's assessments, or even operate without levying a single cent *ad valorem* tax. Experience in Chicago, Detroit, and a host of other cities shows, however, that the problem is not a simple one. Inadequate laws, poor assessment methods, inefficiency, and lax administration of laws not to speak of the depression are conspiring to prevent either a speedy or a complete solution of tax delinquency problems.

As Professor Thomas H. Reed has said: "Reconstruction of our tax system will take years. The only immediate solution is to be found in aroused public opinion, insisting that those who can pay do so and demanding wise laws to promote payment of taxes in the future."

Citizens and officials, realizing the key-stone position held by taxes in the local governmental structure, have undertaken systematic studies of their tax systems. Surveys are being made, greater efficiency and economy insisted on, and taxpayers forced to realize that the payment of taxes is necessary if government is to continue. Pending the lengthy procedure of securing legislative changes, citizens and officials alike have united in drives to collect unpaid taxes, so that they might secure the funds necessary to avert complete collapse of government. Such "Pay Your Taxes" campaigns will not solve the deeper-seated maladjustments responsible for the taxation mess in many cities; but they will ease the financial strain and tide over many units until remedial measures can be put into effect.

Wealthy Westchester County Going After Unpaid Taxes.—Westchester's financial

difficulties reached a climax late in November, when two of the county's four cities were unable to meet payrolls, and the county was without sufficient funds to pay over \$3,000,000 obligations due December 1. Bankers who were the county's principal creditors arranged a temporary loan on condition that a fiscal survey be made, rigid economies introduced, and county and municipalities shift to a cash basis of operation. "Pay-Your-Taxes" campaigns to secure as large a portion as possible of the delinquent taxes were also to be undertaken.

Cities and towns owe the county approximately four and a half million dollars. On December 4 the county sold some three million dollars worth of tax-delinquency certificates, which under Westchester County Tax Law become prior liens against all taxes collected by the debtor municipalities. In order that they might not be deprived of all operating funds, municipalities have been given six months to pay the county what they owe. In that time they must collect enough to pay the county and also maintain local services. Since most of the municipalities must arrange settlements with private creditors, payments to whom are also overdue, they must actually realize on their unpaid taxes in much less than the six months.

The crystallization of the situation will of course result in certain unwelcome developments. The county budget, under discussion at this date, is \$167,530 larger, net, than that for 1932, because of the inability of the county to use any part of a "surplus" of \$400,000 required now to meet expenditures occasioned because of the delinquencies of the municipalities. The tentative budget in Yonkers would increase the tax rate there 64 cents over the 1932 rate. Repeal of a recently adopted tax

lien law in New Rochelle is being proposed because of "hardship" occasioned in its enforcement, while business and real estate interests in Mt. Vernon have sought to prevent the passage of a similar law there.

On the whole, citizens, officials, and interested organizations are cooperating in meeting the emergency. Local newspapers are giving wide publicity to the county's situation and the municipal measures necessary to meet it, prominent citizens are taking a leading part in serving on investigating, liaison, and campaign committees, and officials are doing their part. "Pay-Your-Taxes" campaigns are being organized in Yonkers, Mt. Vernon, New Rochelle, Eastchester, Mamaroneck, Rye, Bronxville, and Harrison, and others are proposed.

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Seizure of Rents Brings in Taxes.—

Tax receipts have more than doubled since Jersey City began action against tax delinquents under the Stout Tax-Receiverhip Act, according to reports. The Stout Act, similar to the Skarda Act under which Chicago is rehabilitating its tax collections, provides that the tax collector may sue to be made receiver for any property taxes on which have been delinquent six months or more, for the purpose of defraying unpaid taxes, penalties, interest, and costs. The receiver and his attorney are not allowed any fees for the receivership, and farm and city property occupied by the owner and from which he receives no revenue is exempt.

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Emergency "Remedies" Hindering Tax Collection.—

During the past few years legislation to "lighten the burden of taxation" has included laws indiscriminately remitting penalty and interest charges on delinquent taxes. Such measures have been adopted to induce the tax defaulter to pay up; in nearly every instance they have had just the opposite effect and have encouraged further tax delinquency.

An emergency session of the Oregon legislature remitted penalties altogether and reduced the interest one third. Large concerns doing business in other states as well, paid their taxes where penalties were stiff, but let their Oregon tax bills run; and small taxpayers have held off paying in the hope that further concessions will be made. As a Port-

land citizen wrote recently: "the present tax collection laws are without force."

A bill now before the Pennsylvania legislature would abate penalties in Philadelphia, which has accrued delinquencies in excess of \$40,000,000. The bill would remit penalties, interest, and other charges on delinquent taxes of 1931 and earlier if paid in full on or before June 30, 1934, and penalties and charges, not including interest, on delinquent taxes of 1932 if paid on or before September 30, 1934. The Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research, in its bulletin, *Citizens Business*, for December 5, comments that this measure would be unfair to those who paid promptly; that taxpayers will take full advantage of the extension of time and the savings so that the city will not receive payment until the deadline; and that there is grave danger that current levies will be withheld in the hope of further remissions in 1934 and 1935. The loss to the city through the cancelling of the debt represented by penalties, interest, etc., would amount to about \$4,000,000.

The Ohio legislature also provided for the remission of penalties, but on condition that current taxes and interest were paid. The qualification seems to have prevented the damage that followed the Oregon bill, but there is no indication that the expedient proved more successful than would a discount for immediate payment.

The city of Detroit is experimenting with penalty remission, though the measure there is tied in with a seven-year funding arrangement. Taxpayers save interest and penalties if they pay before January 10; if they pay over the seven year period, they may reduce the penalty and interest costs by paying in a proportionately shorter time. Revision of foreclosure laws and other tax reforms are expected to offset any ill effects resulting from the penalty remission.

In general, there does not seem to be any safe method of remitting penalties. At the same time, small overburdened homeowners are undoubtedly entitled to relief in the matter of large penalty and interest charges accrued primarily because of the depression. But if penalty remission seems necessary, it should probably be definitely conditional upon the payment of current taxes and interest charges and the written promise of the tax-

payer to undertake a reasonable schedule of installment payments, default on which will immediately re-invoke penalties and make the property liable to sale. It has been suggested as a safe rule that penalties should never be remitted below what the delinquent taxes might earn if invested elsewhere.

Recently a taxpayers association in Woodbury County, Iowa, protested against a postponement of tax sales proclaimed by the governor. The members held that county finances would be still further imperiled by the blow to county credit implied in such a postponement!

C. W. A. workers are helping a Toledo, Ohio, committee making a survey of the city's financial condition. When the study is finished, some time in February, a "Pay Your Taxes" campaign will be launched.

"We have felt that to allow any person to become or to remain delinquent in the payment of his tax allows that person or individual unfair advantages over his fellow citizens," writes Manager of Finance W. F. McGlone of the City and County of Denver. He expects to collect 90 per cent of the 1933 levy.

In a decision of December 5 the New Jersey Supreme Court is reported to have held that the municipality must pay the state and county their share of the taxes before it diverts any moneys to its own purposes. Just a further incentive, if one were needed, for the cities to collect from every taxpayer who can possibly pay in order to keep local services going.

Director of Revenue John E. Hogan of Binghamton, N. Y., reports "a threat to governmental service does not exist here," in commenting on the fact that tax delinquency for the years prior to 1933 is less than one half of one per cent. "Strict enforcement of penalties and collection procedure," and local good fortune in the face of the depression are responsible. Taxes for 1933 are 90 per cent collected, he reported early in December.

Financial Consulting Service.—In response to a situation in which upwards of two thousand municipal and state units are reported in default, the National Municipal League has made available a Financial Consulting Service for municipalities. The Service aims to place at the disposal of cities in financial difficulties the services of a staff of experienced governmental experts who will analyze the financial situation as they find it and recommend whatever measures they may deem necessary to restore the credit and effectiveness of city government.

Studies of six municipalities in New York are the first to be conducted by the Service. These were started, because of the recent crisis in Westchester County, in the cities of Mt. Vernon and Yonkers, and the towns of Harrison, Mt. Pleasant, Greenburg and Cortland.

The work will be carried on under the direction of Dr. Thomas H. Reed of the University of Michigan, recently appointed financial consultant of the League. He is being assisted on the Yonkers study by Philip H. Cornick, of the Institute of Public Administration, Harry Freeman, recently appointed city manager of Asbury Park, New Jersey, Clifford W. Ham, director of the Atlantic City Survey Commission, and C. E. Rightor, former city controller of Detroit and chief accountant of the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research. A preliminary report on Yonkers is now being used in the preparation of the city's budget. Completed reports will include indication of where economies can be effected with least harm, and other recommendations of Dr. Reed and his staff.

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Trenton Tackles Taxes.—Citizens of Trenton, New Jersey, uniting with officials in a "Pay Your Taxes" campaign, collected over \$1,100,000 from September 1 to November 15, 1933, as compared with \$579,000 during the same period in 1932. The campaign is still continuing, with every indication of producing the \$3,000,000 set as the goal when the drive began. Needless to say, the campaign was the result of threats to city services, impending debt payment suspensions, and general financial uncertainty resulting from the fact that a large number of Trenton citizens had not paid their taxes.

The citizens committee, headed by Major

C. Edward Murray, quartermaster general of New Jersey, found that delinquent taxes since 1928 amounted to nearly five and a half million dollars. At least three million dollars had to be raised by December 31 to prevent a crash, but citizens would have to respond generously at the very outset of the campaign if the city was to get funds to meet immediate payments on bonded debt and city payrolls.

The campaign was organized with a small executive committee, and a general committee of forty-four members. An advertising man was engaged to organize campaign routine and prepare promotional and speakers' material. On the basis of a previous study an analysis of tax delinquents was made, and methods of dealing with the different classes devised.

It was found that members of the fire department owed \$2,684, members of the police department \$4,679, and members of the school system, \$7,089. Through the activities of the committee nearly all of these amounts had been cleared up by September 1.

Then the committee found that many landlords and grocers who were receiving state relief money were not paying their taxes. The committee consulted the State Emergency Relief Administration, and after due consideration, the state administration ruled that "delinquent landlords and grocers sharing in these state funds be cut off the list unless they turn over all or a large part of the money to meet their obligations." In order that this rule might be definitely enforced, the Trenton director of state relief submitted lists of all landlords and grocers to the city tax collector's office to be checked for tax delinquency, and asserted that all tax delinquent landlords and grocers receiving relief money would be removed from the approved list until they paid their taxes to the city. This would affect 1,600 landlords receiving a total of \$14,000 a month from the state for rentals for indigent families, and 137 grocers who receive more than \$50,000 a month in food-order business from the relief bureau.

Next, attention was turned to the average taxpayer, who in many instances would be able to pay at least a part of the taxes in arrears. A recent law permitted taxpayers to

pay on the installment plan, payments being allowed in amounts as small as a dollar. This law has been amended by the Tax Act Amendment which compels the installments to be in conformity with the amount of the delinquency, to prevent the unscrupulous from evading their obligations by paying insignificant installments. In short, according to the amendment, back taxes (and current taxes) may still be paid in installments but "unless the payments are in reasonable proportion to the amount of the back taxes, the city commission will take drastic action. "While there will be no favoritism shown if the tax situation terminates in a tax sale, the campaign committee and the city commission expect to take into consideration all extenuating circumstances, and will probably make special arrangements for the acceptance of smaller installments in such instances."

In order to put the desired force into the committee's action, yet avoid creating a feeling of antagonism, a carefully worded letter was sent to taxpayers and widely distributed from house to house and through the press. This letter explained the city's need for cash, appealed to the citizen to pay, and expressed determination that those who could pay would be compelled to do so. The letter, and consequent follow-ups, produced a startling influx of cash into the city treasury.

To bring further pressure to bear on delinquents, the committee suggested a plan where employers were requested either to advance to employees the full amount of their tax delinquency, or stand security on the banks for such a loan, to be paid back in installments from wages or salaries. A number of the largest employers in the city agreed to the plan.

Actually and factually, the campaign is working out very encouragingly. The committee is now turning its hand to the collection of delinquent personalty and poll taxes, some half million of which were outstanding at the beginning of the campaign. If citizens will continue to respond to the appeal, "Pay Your Taxes," Trenton has high hopes of getting out of the red.

GEORGE W. VANAMAN.

Trenton, New Jersey



NOTES AND EVENTS

H. M. OLMSTED

Studying Public Welfare Organization.—

The Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution has assigned to Dr. A. C. Millspaugh the task of making a critical study of the organization of public welfare administration in the United States. The investigation will be conducted in coöperation with the American Public Welfare Association. It is hoped that it may be completed before January 1, 1935.

Present plans include a survey of the organization for supervision, control, direction, and coördination in the federal government, the states, and the counties. An attempt will be made to locate the more vital problems and, through a comparison of different systems and an appraisal wherever possible of actual results, to indicate the general principles which should be followed in legislation during the immediate future.

Public agencies in the welfare field have long been in existence; but the social thinking and the social concepts which determine the objectives and influence the organization of administration are not only relatively recent but are also in constant process of enlargement and integration. Perhaps in no other field is there such evident need of a re-examination of organization in the light of new objectives.

The present depression has emphasized public welfare problems and has enormously increased the scope and burdens of welfare work. Relief, which in the past has been largely a local responsibility, became first a state and is now a federal function. The depression likewise has stirred the public conscience, stimulated criticism of the social order,

and focused attention on the conditions which public welfare administration is designed to ameliorate. Welfare is becoming increasingly public and governmental; and the governmentalization of welfare calls for renewed attention to the problems of organization.

The Brookings Institution hopes to enlist in this study the active assistance of the various national and state associations concerned with public welfare. It especially desires to get in touch with all those who are engaged in studies of special phases of public welfare administration or of state or local organizations.

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Winnetka's Success.—The village of Winnetka, Illinois, receives a meed of praise in the December issue of *The Rotarian*, in which Neil M. Clark tells the story of its successful government. Four points are stressed: the non-partisan caucus that nominates candidates for elective office, the efficiency of the council-manager plan, with Herbert Woolhiser as village manager since the plan was adopted in 1915, the municipal light and water plant, which returns dividends to the taxpayers, and particularly, the spirit of interest and coöperation on the part of the citizens.

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To Study New Jersey Governmental Costs.—Dr. Harley L. Lutz, professor of public finance at Princeton University, and an eminent authority on taxation and finance, has been appointed director of research for the New Jersey Taxpayers' Association. A thorough study of the state's public expenditures and their control will be undertaken.

Governmental Officials in Housing Field Organize.—The National Association of Housing Officials, formed with the purposes of serving governmental officials engaged in housing under public auspices, aiding generally in the supervision and operation of low-cost housing, both urban and rural, and acting as an information clearing house, was organized on November 25 in Chicago, which will be its headquarters.

Ernest J. Bohn, chairman of the housing committee of the Cleveland City Council, was elected president, and Alfred K. Stern, of Chicago, chairman, Illinois Housing Commission, vice-president. Other members of the executive committee are George Gove, secretary, New York State Board of Housing; B. E. Giesecke of Austin, member, Texas Relief Commission; Edmund H. Hoben, in charge of housing, Board of Public Land Commissioners, Milwaukee. Charles S. Ascher, secretary, Public Administration Clearing House, Chicago, was named executive director, and Coleman Woodbury, secretary, Illinois State Housing Board, treasurer.

Charter members include Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes, president of the newly organized Federal Emergency Housing Corporation; Robert D. Kohn, director of housing, Public Works Administration; M. L. Wilson, director, Subsistence Homesteads Division, PWA; members of state housing boards of Ohio, Massachusetts, New York, Texas, South Carolina, Delaware, and Illinois; and housing officials of the three cities that now have public housing projects under development—Cleveland, Toledo, Milwaukee.

Active membership will be limited strictly to public officials, but all others interested in housing and slum clearance are invited to become associate members and to make use of facilities that the clearing house will provide.

Mr. Bohn points out that new problems of administration in housing are arising rapidly. "A year ago there was only one state housing board; today there are thirteen. A year ago there was no municipal housing whatsoever; today numerous cities are taking active interest in it, with three having organizations already established. In addition to all this, there is a Federal Housing Corporation to which \$100,000,000 of PWA money has already been allocated, which will shortly start operations in Detroit and other leading cities."

The Municipal Affairs Committee of the New York City League of Women Voters.—This Committee has been doing outstanding work in behalf of constructive municipal economy, charter revision, maintenance of educational standards, efficient conduct of elections, and other needs of the city. The committee's eighth annual report, covering its work for the year ending June, 1933, has recently been issued. In ten pages of the leaflet are graphically described the many activities of this able and energetic group during an important year in New York's civic history. Committee headquarters are at 155 East 44 Street.

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Half Million to be Spent on Tax Delinquency Study.—\$480,000 has been allotted from the Civil Works Administration for the purpose of a survey of the tax delinquency situation in cities and counties throughout the country. The survey in analysis is being worked out by the Census Bureau in cooperation with the Municipal Finance Officers' Association. Dr. Lent D. Upson, Director of the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, is directing the study.

A detailed analysis of tax delinquency is planned in the sixty-five cities in which the federal government is classifying properties. General inquiry in the other units of local government will be made as to tax delinquency for the last year, or last two years, or total delinquency, if available; recent local or state legislation designed to stimulate or retard tax collections; existing procedure used in preparation of assessment and tax rolls, and for the billing and collection of taxes; essential services that have been curtailed—so far as these can be measured; comparative assessments and taxes levied for past two years; to what extent are funded and unfunded obligations in default, has scrip been issued, and are current bills unpaid?

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Interstate Legislative Conference Sets Precedent.—One hundred representatives of the seventeen northeastern states met in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, October 20 and 21, at a conference by the American Legislators Association at the request of the Pennsylvania legislature. The conference discussed the numerous conflicting regulations which ad-

joining states impose upon the dimensions and weights for buses and trucks. About half of those in attendance were legislators and half administrative officers. Henry W. Toll, executive director of the American Legislators' Association, stated that so far as he knew it was the first of its kind ever held. While agreement on standards was not achieved, the discussions are to be continued with smaller groups of states. Mr. Toll pointed out that a valuable precedent has been set. "Meetings between responsible government officials, such as the one in Harrisburg," he declared, "can do a great deal to remedy unsatisfactory administrative and legislative conditions."

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A Survey of Public Employment.—

The field of elective, appointive and civil service positions throughout the United States, from the smallest township to the national government, will be surveyed by the Commission of Inquiry on Public Service Personnel, recently appointed by the Social Service Research Council. The work of the Commission will be financed by the Spelman Fund. The nation-wide scope of the survey is emphasized by the fact that there are said to be some 2,500,000 employees of local, state, and national governments in this country. According to Dr. Robert T. Crane, director of the Social Science Research Council, the commission will consider policy and method in the recruiting, selection, compensation, training, promotion, and tenure of administrative and technical public employees, and a report will be expected by the end of 1934. The commission consists of Dr. L. D. Coffman, president of the University of Minnesota; Louis Brownlow, director of the Public Administration Clearing House; Ralph Budd, president, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad; A. L. Day, National Academy of Science; and Prof. C. E. Merriam, University of Chicago. The director of research for the commission is Dr. Luther H. Gulick of Columbia University, director of the Institute of Public Administration. Problems with which the commission is expected to deal will include the need of specialized training for many positions; the method of selection; compensation and the relative rewards in public and private service; pensions; the spoils system; lessons to be learned from European ex-

perience; and the creation of a public attitude calling for improvement in public personnel generally.

Asbury Park Selects a City Manager.—

Asbury Park, New Jersey, which recently adopted council manager government has followed the best tradition attached to that form of city control by looking far and wide in search of the best man for the job. The selection has fallen upon Harry H. Freeman, former president of the International City Managers' Association, who was the first city manager of Kalamazoo, Michigan. More recently Mr. Freeman has been director of the Buffalo Municipal Research Bureau.

UTICA BATTLES FOR MANAGER PLAN

(Continued from Page 11)

themselves at home with iced tea and lemonade. The plan was defeated 14,030 to 10,022.

A few comparative statistics shed interesting light upon the effectiveness of the two groups concerned. In the general election of 1931 the friends of the manager system had won by 12,574 to 10,910, the special election thus showing an increase of 3,120 for the opponents and only 2,550 for the supporters of the plan. While the opponents increased their vote in twenty-eight districts (in one district alone by 2,000), the sponsors of the plan only increased theirs in five districts. The largest increase registered by the latter group in one district was thirty votes, but in that same district the opponents increased theirs by one hundred ten. How far the victory of the opponents may be laid to stuffing of ballot boxes or intimidation of voters it is impossible to say. The story is told that the manager group publicly advertised for watchers, and that the party bosses very adequately took advantage of this golden opportunity! If it is true, this blunder is a fitting climax to earlier ones.

After these reverses one might expect the movement to be fairly well ended; yet curiously enough much of the original enthusiasm remains, and leaders forecast renewed activity at an early date. For the sake of reform movements in general and the manager plan in particular it is to be hoped that more political acumen will be shown in the future.